

FEBRUARY 2023

THE METRO REPORT



Ekua Anylanful
Photo by Rachel DeLira

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And Much More

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Welcome 2023!

Greetings and Happy New Year to our readers. We are beginning our year looking forward to bringing even more great stories about businesses, business leaders and business practices in each edition of *The Metro Report*.

This issue features a wealth manager whose personal experiences put her the position of being able to put her knowledge to use for herself. We are also presenting a couple of stories on education and how one local charter school is working to get it's students ready for college and the leader who heads them up. Mental health awareness in the workplace is also presented in our ongoing efforts to destigmatize treatment plans for those suffering from depression. Our spotlight features two women who just happen to be making a difference in the health care field. Finally, in honor of Valentine's day, make sure to check out the center spread from Rachel DeLira in the Style FW feature.

This year, we are excited to be able to present a couple of DEI Roundtable discussions and a new event to help businesspeople make connections with others in the community in our Cocktails, Conversations & Connections event. Stay tuned, we will make save the date announcements for each of these and hope that you will make time to come out and participate, we'd love to meet each of you.

Until next time,
Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton



Publishers Anjie and Shevoyd Hamilton

THE METRO REPORT

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IDEA Edgecliff College Prep – Creating a culture to succeed by Allen White

At a time when teachers are striving to educate the youth of today to be the adults of tomorrow, it is refreshing to see the executive director and staff of IDEA Schools succeed in their chosen field. IDEA Tarrant County is an A-Rated Region based off their 2021-2022 STAAR Results. Of the 7 campuses that tested last year, they finished with 6 A-Rated campuses and 1 B-Rated campus. The goal of Executive Director Dionel Waters Ph. D and his staff is for all campuses to be A-Rated for the 2022-2023 school year.

IDEA Schools are public charter schools and serve college-bound students in schools across Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Ohio. The premise of these schools is to begin preparing them for success in college and in life starting with kindergarteners. They have achieved their record of 100% college acceptance through a focus on personalized learning, and character and leadership development which begins in kindergarten. The staff at each campus is dedicated to making sure that all children succeed every step of the way with the belief all children can and will succeed if given the opportunity.

“Success is defined by my ability to create a culture of achievement, acceptance, joy and pride on my campus for both scholars and staff.”
– Kenieka Francis

IDEA Edgecliff College Prep’s campus is located in southwest Fort Worth and currently serves more than 300 students under the leadership of Principal Kenieka Francis and her staff of 30. Having experienced the inequities in education moving from Ohio to Alabama and back again, Francis refuses to ignore educational inequalities that still exist nationwide. Her experiences led to her decision to pursue education as a career and her more specific desire to work at IDEA is based on her goal of being part of a school where all students are provided the rigorous education allowing them to break down barriers which prevent many students of color from the opportunity to obtain a college degree. Her goals line up with IDEA school’s direction. Her dream is to create a dual credit college academy allowing scholars to receive college

credit prior to graduating high school. Francis believes everyone should have a seat at the table; her goal is to expand the table, especially for young ladies of color. Francis is driven to ensure all IDEA scholars receive the same quality education as students in suburban upper-class neighborhoods.

Included in the staff of 30 at IDEA Edgecliff are the leadership team that reports to Francis. Included in this team are seven minority women who strive to bring out the best in themselves and each other. They share outward mindsets and have become a team striving for the same goal. Their relationships have been built through trust both inside and outside of their work environment and have extended down to the staff and other leaders. “We see people as people,” says Francis. Francis believes she has been gifted to set the atmosphere and she has done so by making decisions centered around IDEA Edgecliff’s scholars and those who serve them. Work/life balance is important to Francis and while she understands that there will be occasions when work must be taken home, she believes in setting tight boundaries for herself and her staff. Maximizing time with family and friends and self-care are priorities that Francis takes seriously. She advocates strongly for mental health and if she needs it or sees a staff member who needs it, finds taking a day to recharge and reset works wonders. Francis explains, “We are educators, but we are also human, and balance is important.”

IDEA Edgecliff has been an A rated campus for the last three years and will welcome the inaugural freshmen class beginning fall 2023 in a new section of campus currently under construction. The school will continue to add a grade level each year and will be a K-12 campus in 2026 with elementary, middle



Kenieka Francis, IDEA Principal
Photo by Steve Rochun

and high school students housed in separate parts of the campus. Students apply and are chosen through a lottery process and those not selected are added to a wait list. Parents chose IDEA for any number of reasons. “The small class size and individualized attention were two factors which led me in enrolling my son,” said Kym Johnson. She went on to explain that open communication with teachers was important and is more than satisfied at the progress her son has made, especially in reading.

The diversity of the staff mirrors the diversity of students at IDEA Edgecliff. This diversity creates an atmosphere of comfort to both students and parents and fosters belief among students that they can succeed. Patience with students and a desire to see them succeed is evident among the staff of



Executive staff of IDEA Edgecliff College Prep, L to R: Victoria Malone, Sasha Jones, Joshlan Ahart, Kenieka Francis, Delilah Almaguer, Nancy Jasso Juarez, Janae Young and Breyona Morrison
Photo by Steve Rochun

IDEA Edgecliff and is attributable to the leadership. Francis says, “Success is defined by my ability to create a culture of achievement, acceptance, joy and pride on my campus for both scholars and staff.”



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CASA of Tarrant County - Creating new ways to support their children by Steve Rochun

Being creative and maintaining relevancy as a way to encourage and support the mental and emotional support for the children they serve is a primary focus for CASA of Tarrant County, a child welfare group that trains community members to serve as court appointed advocates for abused and neglected children.

In October of 2022 CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) launched the Black Hair Care Initiative supporting kids in foster care. The program is part of the group's ongoing efforts to better serve children of color in the child welfare system. "When we think of kids in care, we're usually focused on essentials like safety, food and shelter—but grooming is a basic need, too," said Tracy Williams, a supervisor for CASA of Tarrant County. "Kids, especially teenagers, express their identity and draw much of their self-confidence via their appearance. Many Black/African American children in the foster system weren't receiving hair care to begin with, and then they're placed in care settings that are not equipped or trained to provide proper hair care," says Williams.

“CASA’s goal in advocacy and special initiatives is to help ensure that children don’t completely lose access to vital pieces of their culture and identity.”
— Natalie Stalmach

To address this challenge, CASA of Tarrant County launched the Black Hair Care Initiative. They partnered with Our Kids Our Community, which provides case management for Tarrant County kids in care and Studio BW Salon & Barber in partnership with A King & Queen's Palace Salon located at 902 S. Cedar Ridge Drive Duncanville, TX 75137. The event offered the opportunity for local kids in foster care to receive free professional styling services and products, as well as education that will help them better care for their own hair. Toshiba Hardman, owner and stylist at A King & Queens Palace Salon said, "The Summit was an awesome experience for me not only as a stylist but as a woman, a mother, and woman of God.

The best part of the summit for me was the actual hands-on work, styling the young ladies to their liking.

They chose what hair style they wanted, and we tried our best to deliver as well as converse with them about the insecurities that we as women go thru yet learn to conquer when it comes to our appearance. Knowing that the hairstyle plays such an important role in our appearance was one of the reasons I became a stylist. The young ladies left with totally different attitudes and vibes that evening. Smiles and giggles were what sealed the deal of an awesome summit."

Williams says, "We don't want any child or teen in care to feel less than, or to age out of the system and enter the world unprepared to care for themselves. Our hope is that people in the beauty industry will step up to support this initiative, and that people of all backgrounds will consider becoming part of CASA themselves to support our community's most vulnerable kids."

In 2021, more than 40% of confirmed victims of child abuse and neglect in Tarrant County were identified as Black, yet only a small percentage of CASA volunteers are similarly identified. Additionally, the organization has a chronic shortage of volunteers of all backgrounds, as about 600 kids each year are left waiting for an advocate. "We cannot understate the need and importance for men to become involved and volunteer and support our children," says Williams.

As part of bringing awareness through this initiative, CASA is also hoping to educate the community about the dire need for Black, Latino and male community members to consider training as a volunteer CASA for abused and neglected children and teens in the child welfare system where they are not adequately supported.

Natalie Stalmach, Development Director of CASA of Tarrant County said, "The Black Hair Care Initiative is an important part of CASA's advocacy work that centers the unique needs of each child in foster care. By the time children get to foster care, they've already endured abuse or neglect and have been removed from their home, parents, extended family, friends, school, neighborhood and culture. When they go into a foster home, it's unlikely to match their culture. We have seen children suffer from the upheaval this causes in their lives, and CASA's goal in advocacy and special initiatives is to help ensure that children don't completely lose access to vital pieces of their culture and identity. The black hair Care Initiative is



Photo: iStock

part of a larger picture to provide for the needs of children."

CASA is not just reaching out for barber and styling professionals who can assist with the program, they also are seeking support from professionals in all fields who can contribute, donate and or volunteer. Business owners who are not in the hair care industry can assist by purchasing hair care products for the children, making a donation or by opening and or volunteering their facilities for a Black Hair Care Summit.

Williams says CASA is working on other ways to elevate their support of Black children in foster care, besides the newly created Black Hair Care Initiative.

Stylists, retailers and beauty professionals who are interested, please contact Tracy.Williams@casatc.org or 817.877.5891 to find out how to support the Black Hair Care Initiative.

To learn more about being a CASA (volunteer child welfare advocate): Sign up to become a volunteer at an information session at SpeakUpForAChild.org.

About CASA of Tarrant County:
CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Tarrant County pairs trained, court-appointed volunteer advocates with children and teens who have been taken into

custody by Child Protective Services, for the purpose of serving as the child or teen's "voice" as they move through the family court system. In many cases, a CASA is the only consistent adult figure present during a confusing and frightening time in the life of a child who has already experienced significant trauma. Currently, CASA of Tarrant County has more than 400 active volunteers who come from all walks of life. Despite the impressive number of community members who have stepped up to speak up for a child, however, there are still about 600 kids each year who are left waiting for a CASA, because there aren't enough volunteers to meet the needs.



Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
CASA OF TARRANT COUNTY

Mental health in the workplace by Haley Roberts



Photo: iStock

Only in the last several years has the stigma about mental health begun to fade and allowed open conversation about depression. Providing insurance coverage for mental health counseling has been in place for years, but it is rarely discussed in the workplace, nor is time off recommended to take care of mental health issues.

Recognizing depression and getting proper treatment are paramount to healthy living and thriving in both the workplace, schools and the home.

More than \$210.5 billion in lost earnings per year are due to serious mental illness issues. Depression is listed as the number one leading cause of disability in the United States among people aged 15-44 and ranks among the top three workplace issues in the US along with family crisis and stress. The statistics are jarring. The need for more open discussion about mental health is at an all time high, not just for workers, but for students at all levels as well. Recognizing depression and getting proper treatment are para-

mount to healthy living and thriving in both the workplace, schools and the home.

Some general signs of depression include talk of wanting to die, being a burden, having a plan, feeling hopeless or having no purpose, sleeping too little or too much, being reckless, withdrawing or isolating from others, increased use of alcohol or drugs and extreme mood swings are just a few. There are different kinds of depression and each has its own symptoms, but these apply to general depression. Studies show that 1 in 5 Americans will be impacted by mental illness during their lifetime. Those studies also show that 2 out of 3 people with depression do not seek or receive proper treatment, but 80 percent of those treated for depression show marked improvement in symptoms within 4-6 weeks of beginning treatment.

The path to feeling better is different for everyone and many treatment options are available. For some, medication works well and for others, therapy, either in group sessions or individually works best and for still others a combination of the two is needed. Never compare yourself to other people, everyone is on a different path, and each person has individual needs. No matter what kind of depression you may be diagnosed with there is help, and it starts by taking that

first step forward. Advocate for yourself and with a doctor or licensed therapist find the treatment plan that works for you.

Asked about the most misunderstood thing regarding depression, Sherri Chapell Pratt LCSW-S, director of counseling services at The Women's Center Tarrant County responded "If we ignore it, it will go away." She went on to say, "It is treatable." Often times a depressed employee will not seek treatment because they fear the effect it will have on their job and they are concerned about confidentiality.

Many employees are also unaware they have depression or they fear their insurance is inadequate to cover costs. Most employers will refer a depressed employee for help if they are aware of the symptoms.

There is a long held myth of increased number of suicides during the holiday season, but Pratt explains that while this is not true, depression does increase during the holiday season because of social isolation. This social isolation certainly increased episodes during the pandemic. This increase has caused many social workers and therapists to be overwhelmed with both existing and new clients and has created a backlog and waiting list of people needing counseling services and treatment. This makes it more important

than ever for family members, educators, managers and co-workers to be aware of those around them who may be suffering silently and offer support and possible treatment options.

While the importance of mental health and depression treatment are not stigmatized as they once were, people of color are still reluctant to acknowledge the condition or seek treatment. Pratt believes the stigma is still strong in these communities and there are also trust issues. Another factor in the lack of treatment is the low number of providers who look like them, whether African-American, Hispanic, male, LGBTQ, etc. There are, of course, therapists and counselors who do look like them, it just requires a little more research to find them. Pratt says, "Having access to services with providers who look like them, hearing messages from those they trust (faith-based community leaders, doctors, etc.) that it's okay to seek treatment will help." Marketing to that specific demographic would help as well.



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Dionel Waters Ph.D. – Changing trajectories through education by Allen White

The importance of getting a good education and having good educators has never been more important than now. This sentiment rings true for Dionel Waters Ph. D, executive director for IDEA Public schools – Tarrant County. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Waters left for college with the intention of entering the field of education. “I didn’t have a lot of black male educators,” he said. Waters continued, “I wanted to serve in the education field and be a role model for students who looked like me and came from similar backgrounds.” His career to date has reflected that original ambition.

With this goal in mind, Waters left home after high school and attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA where he received his B.A. in elementary education. He has continued his education, some while working. He has an M.A. in curriculum and teaching from Michigan State University, an MBA and M.Ed. in educational leadership from Dallas Baptist University, a Ph.D. in K-16 educational leadership and policy studies from University of Texas at Arlington. He taught in the classroom for 5 years before serving as a principal for 10 years all of which brought him to his current position. His career has allowed him to teach in several states in the U.S. as well as a stint in Australia. Waters also has served as a principal at all three education levels (elementary, middle and high school).

about providing “layered coaching” to my regional leaders,” says Waters. He coaches and mentors the regional leaders who in turn support the classroom leaders. Waters is a hands-on superintendent, making sure to visit at least 4 of the 8 campuses each week. Encouraged with their A-rated status, Waters shared that IDEA plans to add an additional two campuses in the Tarrant County area by 2030.

Proud to be part of a charter school system, Waters believes within the next five years, many more students will migrate to the charter school model. Having taught in both traditional and charter schools, he can see pros and cons for each platform. Some of the biggest challenges facing education today include closing academic learning gaps, getting students excited about coming to school (the pandemic has had a big effect on that) and continuing to improve the pipeline of highly qualified and caring educators in every school. He is working towards facing these challenges and is positioning the IDEA schools to overcome these challenges. A few benefits of working in the charter schools include the amount of autonomy available in human resource decisions, curriculum selection and discretion in conducting discipline. There are still guidelines that must be followed according to state regulations, but the autonomy available gives Waters liberty to deal with issues on a case-by-case basis for the benefit of both staff and students.

Waters believes in the IDEA schools so much, his own children attend classes at one of the Tarrant County campuses. Asked why parents would choose IDEA schools over traditional public schools, Waters responded, “If families are looking for a rigorous academic experience with the focus of ‘College To & Through’, then IDEA Tarrant County is their best bet.” The waiting list to get into these schools is testament to that.

Waters is married with two children and spends his free time exercising, reading, traveling and spending time with family and friends. At a time when educators are leaving for other fields, Waters still gains satisfaction working in the field he has dedicated his career to. “Being able to see my ‘vision’ come to fruition for the benefits of students and their families is my favorite part of being in education,” says Waters. He continues, “This is a powerful piece as we are changing the trajectory of many families through education.”

“Being able to see my ‘vision’ come to fruition for the benefits of students and their families is my favorite part of being in education.”
– Dionel Waters

These experiences have given him insight and direction in how he leads others. In his current role, he oversees more than five-hundred staff and more than four thousand students. He believes strongly in supporting his staff and giving them tools to perform their jobs at the highest levels. The employees for IDEA Schools Tarrant County are familiar with his personal conviction that there are TWO types of employees in IDEA Schools Tarrant County: 1) Those who teach and 2) Those who support those who teach. “I am adamant



Dr. Dionel Waters, IDEA Executive Director
Photo by Steve Rochun

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Dallas-based nonprofit pharmacies' model delivers on double-bottom line by Barbara Clark-Galupi

Prism Health North Texas (PHNTX) is the largest HIV/AIDS service organization in the region and has expanded its services to reach more of the North Texas community regardless of socioeconomic or insurance status. The organization provides STI testing and treatment, dental care via three practices in the Dallas area, transgender primary care and primary care services at its four health centers. The organization regularly provides rent and housing assistance, clothing, and other necessities to its patients in need. They also offer a variety of behavioral health services in addition to healthcare services that allow North Texans to take control of their health.

A majority of PHNTX patients are low-to-no income with a little more than half having no health insurance. A majority of their patients are Black and Latino/x. The organization saw a need for a pharmacy that provided culturally-competent care and a welcoming environment.

or in the same building. By adding a collocated pharmacy, patients have a 'one stop shop' to take care of their healthcare needs as they can go to their medical appointments, have their prescriptions sent to the collocated pharmacy, and pick up the prescriptions with little to no wait. This ease of access to medications that provide necessary treatment reduces the need for additional appointments and ultimately reduces costs for the organization.

In 2019 and 2020, PHNTX launched three community-based pharmacies in Dallas to support their clients:

- South Dallas – 4907 Spring Avenue, Suite 101, Dallas Texas 75210
- Sunset Avenue – 219 Sunset Avenue, Suite 116A, Dallas Texas 75208
- Lemmon Avenue – 2801 Lemmon Avenue, Suite 100, Dallas Texas 75204.

Since opening the pharmacies, more than 4,500 patients have been served across all three locations – with 95.4% of those already being clients of PHNTX clinics. As the pharmacies continue to grow, PHNTX would like for their pharmacies to also become a resource for non-clinic patients living near their clinics and a revenue generator for altruistically-minded patients anywhere in Texas.

PHNTX Pharmacies offer all of the same advantages of going to a 'big box retailer' operated pharmacy but because they are a nonprofit, a portion of the profits can go back into their other community services.

Anyone can use the PHNTX Pharmacies and they accept most major insurers as well as cash customers

PHNTX is a 'one stop shop' for patients to take care of their healthcare needs.

The need for a PHNTX Pharmacies was first of concern in South Dallas as the closest pharmacy to their clinic was over three miles away, creating a barrier to obtaining medication for patients without reliable transportation. Prior to the pharmacies opening, the clinics did not have a collocated pharmacy nearby

and delivery is free with some restrictions. They can deliver anywhere in the state of Texas. There are some insurance plans that will not allow delivery or require specific delivery methods, but anyone can call the pharmacy to discuss the available delivery options and choose the best one for them.

Patients can easily transfer their prescriptions to a PHNTX pharmacy at phntxpharmacy.org/prescriptions.

Barbara Clark-Galupi is the founder and publisher of DFW501c Nonprofit Business Journal which seeks to advance the impact of nonprofit organizations across the entire North Texas area.

Barbara Clark-Galupi – DFW501c.news barbara@dfw501c.com



Photos provided by PHNTX



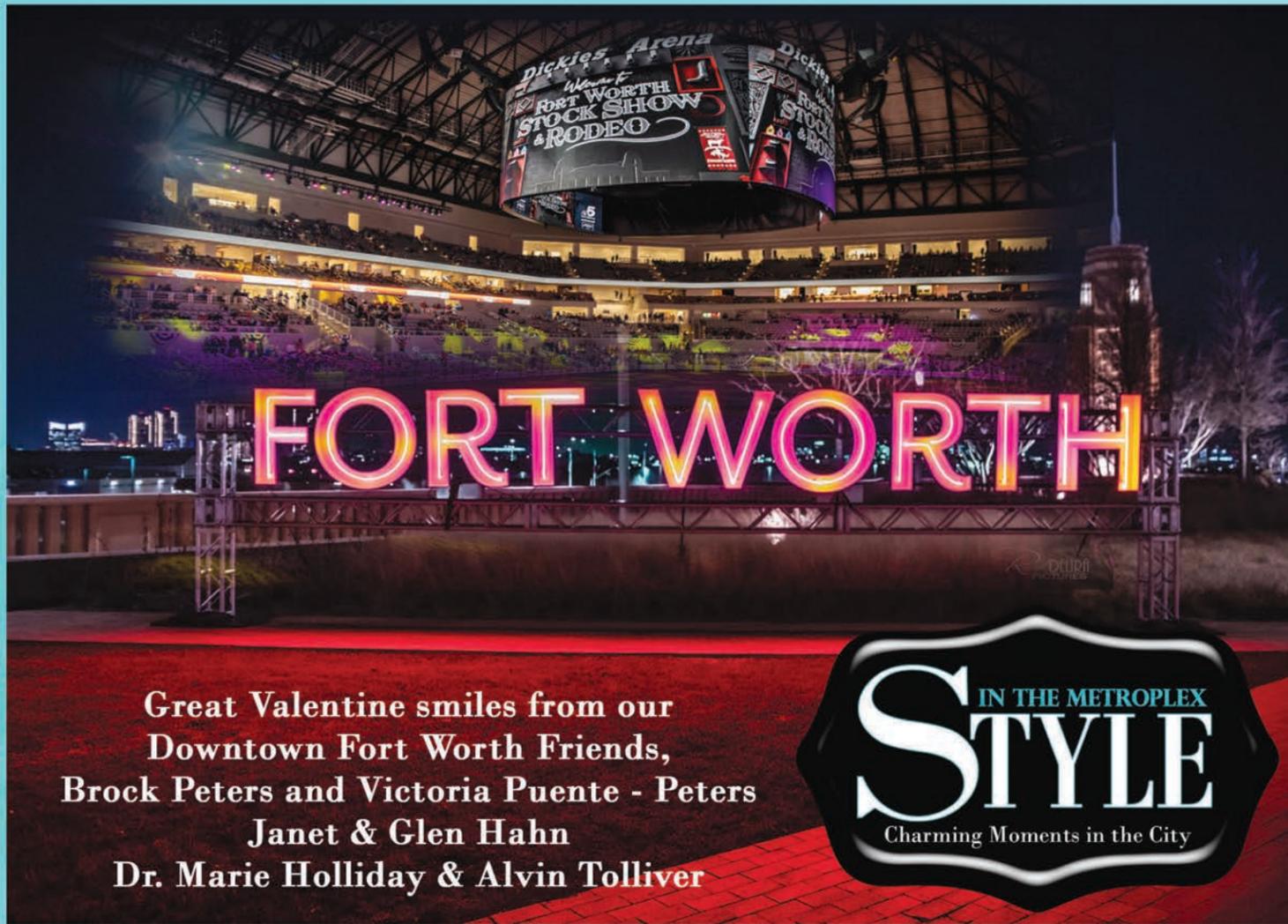
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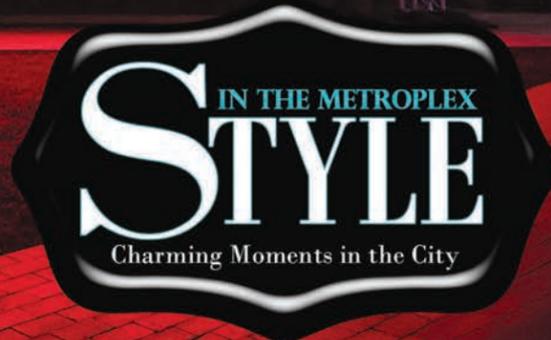
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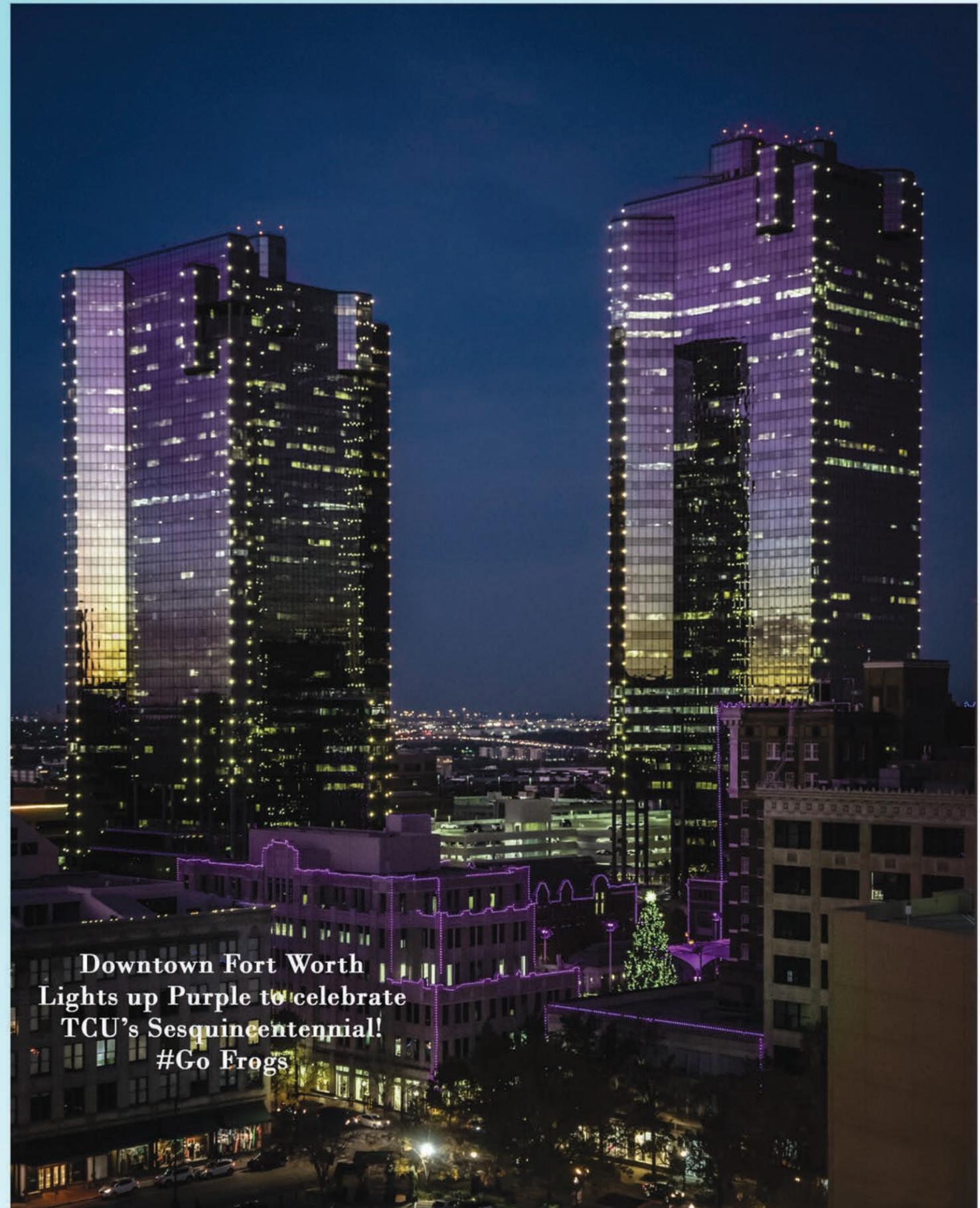




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Ekua Anyanful – EA Wealth Management

by Annie Warren

Endurance, hard work and restraint are keys to making a business successful, especially small businesses. They often are strained for resources and independently try to divide themselves and finances between work, sales, marketing, and networking – while seeking funding, direction and clarity.

“Sometimes they are searching but do not know where to go,” says Ekua O. Anyanful, MBA, CFP®. She has been working in the financial industry for more than 20 years. In 2011 she followed the small business route and launched EA Wealth Management. She advocates for small businesses not only because she is one, but she knows their success relies on expert planning, sound financial strategy and a solid infrastructure.

A business plan and analysis are initially needed to help align goals with finances. One misstep is not including marketing and advertising. Anyanful says this should be a part of every business plan. “You have to build your brand, risk tolerance and understand how to sustain long term.” Networking is another crucial part for small businesses. It creates awareness, visibility and builds connections.

Born in Ghana, she watched her father, a physics researcher, work with heart and dedication. But perhaps the bigger influence was her mother, a secretary who worked hard but stayed devoted to her craft of selling unique and hard-to-find African cloths to the people she worked with. As a child she would tag along with her mother to neighboring countries and watch her meticulously find the best materials to sell to the ladies she knew. Her mother would sell on credit and wait for pay day to collect. Now 88 years young, Anyanful’s mother is retired from the day job, but her passion business is still in operation. With the demand still strong for her products, she built a store in front of her home and is able to supply her customers with fabrics.

According to Texas Economic Development Small Business Assistance, the state of Texas boasts the best business climate in the nation, home to 3.1 million small businesses. However, sometimes a business can be started without adequate planning: overconfidence, lack of funding and failure to communicate and seek help. All can lead to frustration, lack of commitment and failure.

A financial advisor helps create long-term strategies to obtain, build and manage risk. “A financial advisor is the license; wealth management is the broader

process,” says Anyanful. She highlights the importance of focusing on goals, sustainability and documents, (including wills, tax records, estate).

Anyanful offers four main business strategies every business should have to start off right: cash management services, insurance and retirement planning along with wealth management. “Because once you secure wealth it is highly important to know how to manage it.”

Anyanful educates women and others through monthly seminars, no charge consultations and speaking engagements. Heading her own advice, she also teams up with other professionals including The Business Hatchery to help small businesses navigate through the startup process. (thebusinesshatchery.com).

According to a recent study, women-owned businesses now account for 38 percent of all U.S. firms, employ 8 percent of the private-sector workforce and account for 4 percent of the nation’s business revenues. “Pay attention to the women in the room,” says Anyanful. Female CEOs are at their highest in history and “they are perceptive and often influence financial decisions. They often work harder and can be overlooked.”

“

Female CEOs...are perceptive and often influence financial decisions. They often work harder and can be overlooked.

– Ekua Anyanful

”

Funding is available through various sources. “There is money out there,” says Anyanful. Between Paycheck Protection Program, (PPP), grants and small business loans, “you have to know where to look.” Equally important is the pro bono education and financial planning analysis that EA Wealth Management offers for women and business owners who need financial planning advice and services, but have limited resources. Anyanful is a firm believer in coordinating goals and risk tolerance to achieve goals. She advises a needs analysis that involves some hard questions: How much time and money to invest? What is the purpose? Is there a defined market and target audience.

SEE “EA WEALTH MANAGEMENT” ON PAGE 19



Photo credit: Rachel DeLira

'Good For You Pantry' Program Expands

PRESS RELEASE

'Good For You Pantry' Program Expands, Making Healthy Food More Accessible Through School and Community Partnerships

11th pantry opens with nine more slated; expansion funded by Tarrant County ARPA grant

An effort by North Texas Healthy Communities to make fresh produce and healthy groceries more accessible to Tarrant County families is getting a major boost, thanks to a grant from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), with funds administered by Tarrant County. The Good For You Pantry program received ARPA funding to open its 11th location at Fort Worth ISD's C.C. Moss Elementary this week, with nine more pantries slated to open throughout Tarrant County by the end of 2024.

Launched in November 2019 at Daggett Middle School, the Good For You Pantry program is directed by North Texas Healthy Communities, the outreach arm of Texas Health Resources that implements Blue Zones Project and other well-being initiatives in Tarrant County and beyond. Pantries are housed in schools and community centers and allow residents to select their own fruits, vegetables, and other healthy staples at no cost.

“We’re...working with our partners to bring healthy food options and other important resources to more families in our community.”
- Matt Dufrene

“Thanks to ARPA funding we can expand the Good For You Pantry program beyond Fort Worth and reach communities throughout Tarrant County,” said Matt Dufrene, North Texas Healthy Communities vice president. “We’re currently evaluating where the needs are greatest and working with our partners to bring healthy food options and other important resources to more families in our community.”

To help Good For You Pantry customers make the most of their groceries, pantries offer recipe cards, cooking utensils, and links to virtual cooking demonstrations. Shoppers can also take advantage of on-site cooking demonstrations and nutrition workshops,

presented in partnerships with local chefs, nutrition experts, and culinary students.

“The research is clear: Healthy foods are linked to better health and overall well-being, especially for children,” said Dufrene. “Schools and community centers are trusted resources and wonderful partners in our efforts to eliminate barriers and make healthy choices easier and more accessible.”

Access to affordable, healthy food is a critical social determinant that can greatly affect physical and mental health outcomes, especially in children. According to county data, 22% of Tarrant County households and 36% of Dallas households have no vehicle and live more than a mile from a grocery store or supermarket; more than 800,000 people across Tarrant, Dallas, Denton, and Collin counties experience food insecurity; and more than 25% of children in North Texas are food insecure.

Traditional food pantries generally offer nonperishable, processed foods. The Good For You Pantry program is focused on supplementing those efforts with fresh fruits and vegetables, along with other healthy staples, often culturally relevant for the community each pantry serves. Some pantries also offer diapers and toiletries. Families choose the items they take home, just as when they shop in a store.

Each Good For You Pantry serves 50 to 75 families, and typically offers twice monthly shopping opportunities. To date, the program has distributed 127,835 pounds of produce, serving more than 25,000 people.

“C.C. Moss families and our surrounding community will truly benefit by having this pantry in our school,” said Charla Staten, principal of C.C. Moss. “As a Blue Zones Project Approved school, we are keenly focused on the health and well-being of our young scholars.”

In addition to C.C. Moss Elementary, pantry locations include these eight Fort Worth ISD schools: Alice Contreras Elementary, Carter Park Elementary, Daggett Middle School, M.H. Moore Elementary, Oakhurst Elementary, Van Zandt-Guinn Elementary, Versia Williams Elementary, and Wedgwood Middle School. Two other Good For You Pantry sites are at Fortress Youth Development Center and LVTRise Community Center in Fort Worth.

NTHC efforts to build a stronger, healthier food ecosystem also include Fresh Access, a program that distributes fresh produce at Fort Worth community centers. Other initiatives include funding and support for school gardens, support for farmers markets and urban farms, and Double Up Food Bucks, which



enables Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit participants to double their savings on fresh produce at participating farmers markets and grocers. In addition, the Culled Produce Recovery Program, a partnership with local urban farms and grocery stores, gives new life to unsold produce. Blue Zones Project is a signature initiative and one of many led by NTHC to improve the health of the people in the communities served by Texas Health Resources.

Learn more about these healthy food initiatives at LiveLongFortWorth.com.



EA Wealth Management

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

“Use a professional and get the paperwork right,” she says.

Anyanful is proud and excited to know that the company that bears her name has survived and is thriving. As with any momentous undertaking, small business ventures are no different. Helping businesses and her clients are forefront at all times as well as advising them on ways to remain sustainable. “If they do well I do well.”

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SPOTLIGHT ON:

Kalondia (Neasy) McCain

Company: JPS Eligibility Outreach Coordinator

City of residence: Fort Worth

City of birth: Pensacola, FL

Spouse: Joseph McCain

Children: Two biological and caregiver for two nieces

Twenty years ago, I never knew: trying to balance so many different roles would be so hard.

What was your favorite TV show as a kid?
Reading Rainbow and a *Different World*

What is your favorite Netflix or Prime binge?
Cupcake Wars

What's your favorite vacation spot? Florida

If you could have any car in the world, what would it be? Charger

What's worth paying for? A nice vacation

Drink of choice? Core Water

What is your most treasured possession?
 My family

What's your favorite children's book? *The Cat in the Hat*

What are you afraid of?
 Living life without fulfilling my purpose.

What causes are important to you? Giving to the less fortunate and helping those in need with expecting nothing in return.

What is your music of choice? I love soft melodies

What excites you most about the future? Being able to help and educate Tarrant County residents about resources available through JPS Connection.

What are your must-haves on a road trip? Snacks and a blanket

What have you recently done for the first time? I have recently become a proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. - Psi Zeta Chapter.

What do you collect? I collect tumblers. I love cups

What does success look like?
 Success looks like knowing you have made a positive difference in someone else's life.

If you could learn a new skill, what would it be?
 Learning to speak a second language is vital to reach those outside one's culture.

Where do you get your inspirations? I get my inspiration from my mother. She took the little she had raised my two siblings and me. I learned that being wealthy is not about having a bank account full of money; true wealth is love and giving to others even when you don't have.

What advice would you give your younger self? Never to stop loving myself while evolving. It's ok not to get things right the first time, but the key is to keep trying.

What book would you recommend to everyone?
The Five Love Languages

In 10 years, I hope to be: creating a legacy for my children to follow.



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