

TRISHA BLACK

Breakout Session: Women in Economic Development



Trisha Black joined the Main Street Alabama staff as the Field Services Specialist in February 2016 after working as a local Main Street Director for over seven years in Athens, AL. In 2020, she transitioned into the role of Marketing and Communications Manager. In February 2022, she was promoted to Assistant State Coordinator.

During Black's tenure, Spirit of Athens became a state-designated and nationally accredited Main Street program. Along with dedicated volunteers, Black was the driving force behind several projects emulated both state-wide and nationally including the Athens Saturday Market, a state-certified farmers market, the Athens Grease Festival, an annual community event and fundraiser, and High Cotton Arts, an incubator that provides working spaces for 8 artists.

Black received the 2014 Main Street Alabama Leadership Award, recognizing her for frequently sharing her knowledge of the Four Point Approach with both communities interested in downtown revitalization and other Main Street programs. In 2015, Trisha shared her Organization Point expertise in Fort Payne as a part of the Main Street Alabama Resource Team. In 2020, she earned her Main Street America Revitalization Professional certification from the National Main Street Center.

She is a 1993 graduate of Troy University with a bachelor's degree in political science and journalism.

LECIA BROOKS

Panelist: Intergenerational Leadership



Lecia Brooks is the chief of staff and culture for the SPLC, where she provides counsel to senior leadership, assists with strategic planning and works with people from across the organization to ensure the SPLC's success, whether it is achieving long-term goals or maintaining effective daily operations.

Before her current role, Brooks served as the SPLC's chief workplace transformation officer, where she supported leadership and staff efforts to build a culture of inclusiveness and ensure a continued focus on diversity and equity.

Brooks also previously served as the SPLC's outreach director, where she traveled across the U.S. and abroad to speak about hate and extremism. Earlier, she was director of the SPLC's Civil Rights Memorial Center, an interpretive experience designed to provide visitors to the Civil Rights Memorial with a deeper understanding of the civil rights movement.

Brooks, who joined the SPLC in 2004, has a wealth of experience in diversity advocacy training for corporations and nonprofit organizations, including Walmart, Lyft, Pixar, the Salzburg Seminar, and the Newark Public Library.

STEPHANIE BRYAN

Keynote Speaker



In 2014, Stephanie Bryan became the first female political leader elected to the position of Tribal Chair and CEO for the Poarch Creek Indians. In this position, not only is she involved with the legislative aspect of the Tribe, but she also oversees all Tribal operations including Tribal Government, Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority (CIEDA), and PCI Gaming Authority (PCIGA). Previously, she served as Vice-Chair of the Tribal Council since 2006.

A life-long member of the Poarch community, Stephanie has been an active and effective advocate for her Tribe on both a local and national level. Even before her time on Tribal Council, Chairwoman Bryan was a known leader in the community. As an employee of the Tribe, she gained a wide range of experiences that has helped inform her decisions even today.

As a member of the Tribal Council, she advocated for extending health insurance to all Tribal Members and employees and worked to expand educational opportunities for every Tribal Member and First-Generation Indian Descendant. She also took an active role in ensuring the opening of Poarch's new health clinic and its assisted living facility. Furthermore, Chair Bryan strongly values and appreciates her elders and believes it is vital to instill the importance of Creek culture and history into the younger generations.

On a national level, Chairwoman Bryan represents her community with her involvement in regulations affecting Indian gaming as well as legislation affecting the Tribe and Indian Country. She has worked with numerous legislative committees as well as multiple Native American organizations such as the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA), and United South and Eastern Tribes (USET). In addition to these boards, the Tribal Chair has exemplified her dedication to the community, Tribe, and Indian Country through her service on the following boards and committees:

- Business Council of Alabama Executive Committee

- Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- PCI Gaming Authority
- National Indian Gaming Commission Working Group
- National Tribal Gaming Commissioners and Regulators
- Escambia County Alabama Community Hospital Board
- National Indian Gaming Association Delegate
- United South and Eastern Tribes Delegate
- Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Advisors

While working with these entities, she has had the unique honor of seeing her work aid in the accomplishment of numerous endeavors that have benefited the Poarch Creek Indians, multiple communities, countless organizations, and other tribes as well.

Chairwoman Bryan attributes her devotion to her Tribe and public service to the deep appreciation for what the community has meant to her and her family. Stephanie was reared in the heart of the Poarch Community and has experienced first-hand the metamorphosis of the Tribe from poverty to prosperity. She firmly believes that hardship builds character and well remembers the days of raising her family in federally funded Tribal housing and working two jobs while attending college. Despite the Poarch Creek Indian's tremendous success, she is never far from her roots and remains very humble and grateful.

The Chairwoman focuses much of her efforts now on making sure the next generation of Poarch families has the education and career opportunities they need. She and her husband Keith have raised three children and ten grandchildren who are loving reminders of the work that needs to be done to sustain a healthy, productive sovereign Indian nation like Poarch.

Stephanie hopes, too, that her own personal story will show others that with determination, grit, and the support of a loving community and family, anything is possible, and dreams can become reality.

RONDA CHERRY-SMOKE

Breakout Session: Mentors: How to Find One, How To Be One



Ronda Cherry-Smoke is the Customer Service Manager of Alabama Power's Montgomery Business Office. She is responsible for providing strategic direction and leadership for one of the company's largest offices in the state. Ronda leads a team that provides the courteous, accurate, and efficient delivery of service to residential and commercial electric utility customers.

Since joining Alabama Power in 2004, Ronda has served in a variety of Customer Operations and leadership roles. She is committed to excellence in Customer Service and to providing opportunities for employee growth, professional development, and job satisfaction. Ronda is bilingual and speaks English and Spanish fluently. She is the Managing Sponsor for the Culture Committee, that leads the Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion initiatives for Alabama Power's Customer Service Organization, and leads a Women's Professional Development Program with the Company.

Ronda is an actively involved with several civic and charitable organizations. She serves on several non-profit boards of directors, including those of the statewide Alabama Power Service Organization (APSO), the River Region United Way, the Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama, and is the 2022 Chairman of both the Second Chance Foundation Board of Directors, and the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Committee.

Her educational background includes an MBA from Troy University and a Bachelor's in Business and Organizational Resources from Huntingdon College.

Ronda is originally from in Middletown, Rhode Island and is an avid New England Patriots fan. In addition to watching football, Cherry-Smoke is a wife and mother who enjoys reading, photography, cooking, traveling, and attending her children's sporting events.

BETHANY DAVIS

Panel Moderator: Intergenerational Leadership



Bethany Davis is a general assignment reporter for WSFA 12 News.

She came to WSFA 12 News in March 2000 as a producer while attending Auburn Montgomery. She worked on the weekday 5,6 and 10 p.m. newscasts until she was named executive producer of Today in Alabama in 2005.

In 2008, she began presenting segments in front of the camera and had completely transitioned into her role as a general assignment reporter by 2010.

She's been part of WSFA 12 News' award-winning coverage of events like the Rosa Parks Museum opening, Hurricane Ivan and the Enterprise Tornado in 2007. She was the first reporter on the scene when Alabama State Troopers raided VictoryLand Casino in 2010 and reported live as the sun came up over the destruction of the 2011 tornadoes in Elmore County.

Bethany grew up in Opelika. She lives in Montgomery now with her husband, Judd, anchor of Today in Alabama. She has three boys, William, Joshua, and Hudson.

BRENDA ROBERTSON DAVIS

Breakout Session: Women in Economic Development



Executive Director of the Millbrook Chamber of Commerce.

A native of Fort Walton Beach Florida, Brenda is a graduate of Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama, where she studied Psychology and Business Administration. She has worked in the Public Relations and Fundraising fields for nearly 20 years. She has also been a Freelance Writer for several magazines throughout Alabama and Florida, including Alabama Living, River Region Living (now Metro360) and Joy to Life.

Brenda has served as an Ambassador for the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, on the Arts Council of Montgomery where she served as Chair of ACES, panel judge for the Alabama State Council on the Arts, Board Secretary of Mary Ellen’s Hearth, Arts & Culture committee member of Envision 2020, and was a member of the Junior League of Montgomery, where she was a writer and Editor of League Logs. She served as Membership Chair of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, is a graduate of Legacy Class XXXVI of Leadership Montgomery, is member of the Prattville-Millbrook Sunrise Rotary Club and a Paul Harris Fellow Award recipient.

TANDREA S. ELMORE

Breakout Session: Life Before, During, and After a Pandemic



Tandra S. Elmore, MS, LPC, NCC, is a Montgomery, Alabama native educated in Montgomery Public Schools. In 2002, she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology at Auburn University and continued to further her education in Counseling Psychology, specifically Community Agency Counseling at Troy University. Tandra is a third-year doctoral candidate in General Education at Northcentral University. Tandra is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a National Board-Certified Counselor. Her work experience includes an

extensive background in working with youth and their families in high-risk environments such as youth development centers, boot camps, detention facilities, therapeutic foster care, and currently in the local school system.

Additionally, Tandra has experience working with adults in intensive outpatient chemical addictions programs. This work does not include diligent and countless hours served through volunteerism. Tandra is the owner and founder of Project 2 Uplift, Inc, where the mission is to uplift children and families one family at a time. In 2020, Tandra decided to venture into private practice and founded New Vision Counseling Center, LLC, to help individuals establish and maintain mental and emotional wellness in the local community. She works daily advocating for marginalized populations to break the stigma within cultures likely to shy away from mental health services. Tandra is an Adjunct Psychology Instructor at a local community college. In conclusion, Tandra is a current and active member of the American Counseling Association, Alabama Counseling Association (ALACA), Chi Sigma Iota (counseling honor's society), National Society of Leadership and Success, and currently serves in the Member at Large position for the Marriage and Family Therapy division of ALACA.

CHARITY GLOVER

Panelist: Intergenerational Leadership



Ms. Charity Grace Glover, born on May 11, 2000, is the youngest child of Lorenza and Cynthia Glover. A native of Montgomery, Alabama, she currently attends Alabama State University where she majors in English and minors in Legal Studies. At Alabama State University, she is involved in several programs such as the American Red Cross Club, ASU A.S.P.I.R.E, and Collegiate 100. Ms. Glover also served as a Golden Ambassador, an A.C.E.S. Peer Tutor/Mentor, and an Emerson Collective Smithsonian Research Fellow. Her motto, coming from Romans 8:31, is "If God is for me, then who can be against me?" Upon graduating, Ms. Glover plans to attend law school, so she can adequately fight for justice and be an honest voice for those who are often neglected or exploited.

MICHELE KONG***Opening Keynote***

Dr. Michele Kong, MD, MBA, received her medical degree from the University of Calgary, Canada. She then completed pediatric residency at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, MS, followed by pediatric critical care fellowship at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), Birmingham, AL. Dr. Kong is the co-founder of KultureCity, the world's leading non-profit in sensory accessibility and inclusion for those with invisible disabilities (such as autism). She is a Professor of Pediatrics at UAB and practices medicine as an intensivist at Children's Hospital of Alabama. Dr. Kong is an NIH funded physician scientist at UAB. She is a highly regarded speaker, and well published in high-impact medical and non-medical journals. She was recently awarded the 2019 Woman of Impact Award, which recognizes the honoree's personal and professional contributions to the State of Alabama that have moved the needle across business, government, and non-profit sectors. In 2021, she was also listed in the 'Who is Making Asian American Pacific Islander History in 2021: The GMA Inspiration List, Good Morning America'. At UAB, her contribution to the field, and service to the community was recognized with the UAB Dean's Excellence Award in Service, UAB Outstanding Woman in the Community Award, and the Odessa Woolfolk Community Service Award. Michele is also an avid ultrarunner and successfully competed in a 100 mile race.

ELIZABETH WILHOIT LARSON***Breakout Session: Women In Empowered Communication***

Elizabeth Wilhoit Larson received her M.A. and Ph.D. from Purdue University. She is currently an Associate Professor in the School of Communication and Journalism at Auburn University. Her teaching and research is focused on women's careers and leadership and how the material environment of an organization makes a difference for organizing activities. In her free time, she enjoys running, gardening, running, and doing crafts.

LEE McMICHAEL

Breakout Session: Family Wellness



Lee McMichael, MSW, LICSW, CEMDR, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over 20 years' experience working with children, adults, and families, primarily with mental health issues. She has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from George Mason University and Masters in Social Work from Western Kentucky University, and has advanced training in Trauma therapy, Family Systems, and is certified in EMDR. Before moving to Alabama in 2020, she had a private practice in Bowling Green, Kentucky and was an adjunct clinical instructor at Western Kentucky University. Currently Lee is practicing at Pike Road Counseling and is an adjunct instructor for the Social Work program at Auburn University in Montgomery.

LILY NIZAM

Panelist: Intergenerational Leadership



Lily Nizam is a practicing physician associate and small business owner of Alabama Surgical Arts in Montgomery Alabama where she and her husband provide oral and facial cosmetic surgery and medical spa procedures. She was born and raised in Boston, MA and relocated to Montgomery 3 1/2 years ago to start their practice with over 20 employees. She holds a master's degree from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. She is involved in her community with our very own Junior League of Montgomery and mentoring and empowering women with her platform Dare to Be You. Lily also holds a black belt in Tae Kwon Do and believes that self-defense and confidence is important to start young. She is your current reigning Mrs. Alabama United States 2021.

CATINA PICKETT

Breakout Session: Mentors: How to Find One, How To Be One



Catina Pickett is a Montgomery native and comes from a background of over 25 years retail management, community service, and entrepreneurship. In 2010, she established her event planning business, Elegance Unlimited. In 2016, Catina devoted her time to serving her community and founded an organization, Southern Belle Tea Group, Inc. to inspire, encourage, and support women and children throughout the River Region. Through her journey of purpose, Catina Pickett currently serves as Director of Development for Brantwood Children's Home.

She is a devoted wife, a proud mother of two adult children, and GiGi to four beautiful grandsons.

Member of New Life COGIC Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. 2021 Citizenship Award Recipient, Leadership Montgomery Legacy Class XXXVII Alumni.

"It is not about how much we give, but how much love we put into giving that counts." - Mother Teresa

AMANDA SENN

Virtual Breakout Session: Women & Finances



Amanda is the Chief Deputy Director for the Alabama Securities Commission where she has been employed since 2008. She is responsible for advising the Commission on securities-related matters, investigating and prosecuting fraudulent actions surrounding the sales of securities throughout the state of Alabama, and has coordinated and litigated numerous multi-jurisdictional administrative, civil, and criminal matters. She also serves as a legislative liaison for the Commission. In that capacity, she advocates for investor protections and market integrity in Alabama.

Amanda is involved on both the State and local level in various organizations which address issues and promote awareness of Elder Abuse and Investment Fraud; including the Montgomery County Elder Justice Task Force and the Alabama Interagency Council for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. She is actively involved in the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA), where she serves as Chairman of the Cybersecurity Committee, Co-Chair of the Broker Dealer Market and Regulatory Policy Committee and is a member of project groups in the Investment Adviser and Enforcement sections. She is a frequent speaker on Alabama's securities laws and Elder Justice, an instructor in a securities litigation course offered through NASAA, and has testified before the United State House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on National Security, International Development and Monetary Policy on fraud and elder exploitation. Amanda is a member of the American Inns of Court, serves on the board of the Montgomery County Bar Association, and president of the Alabama Association of Regulatory Boards (AARB).

A Montgomery, Alabama native, Amanda graduated from Huntingdon College, Montgomery, AL and received her JD from the Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, Birmingham, AL. She is a member of the Huntingdon Alumni Board, an officer in the Montgomery Bicycle Club, and is a long-standing volunteer and supporter of the Montgomery Miracle League.

KEIAUNA WHITE

Breakout Session: Women in Economic Development



My name is Keiauna. I'm a "haute mess" and I'm living my dream. Born and raised in Montgomery, Alabama and so happy to still be here witnessing its growth. As a matter of fact, I am excited to be a part of that growth.

Jesus, family, and adventure are my jam and that's the short version.

In 2014, I started Montgomery's first full size mobile boutique and boy was that a real road trip. At that time our city had not yet acknowledged mobile businesses as businesses, so the ride was a bit bumpy but so much fun. I am a firm believer though, that in life God gives us vision and those visions become dreams and dreams DO NOT die. Life happens of course and after high school graduations, divorce, marriage, what I thought was a new career path, a terrible and traumatic car accident and thinking that I would never drive again my path became clearer. I began to get my roll on again and popped up in the downtown area. I was in love. Tourism was booming, and the idea of being more stationary proved to be great for myself as well as my BeYOUtiful family.

Some say that I have played a bit of hopscotch on Dexter Ave, and I'm cool with that. The BeYOUtiful Boutiques has landed at 1 Court Square, right behind the fountain and this is where you can find me.

While business is transactional, I believe in service. I am here, not just to sell sweaters and sequin but to serve the women and men in my community. Most of whom I have coined as The BeYOUtiful Family. You see the business has fostered the opportunity to build relationships that extend far beyond the walls of the

boutique. We laugh, we cry, we pray, we dance, we uplift we practically share our lives with each other. We are family.

It's the sparkle in the eye of the woman that finds her confidence "for me". Stop by and say hi, when you can. I can't wait to meet you.

LARA WILSON

Panelist: Intergenerational Leadership



Lara Wilson serves as the Chief Officer of Communications and Engagement for the Montgomery Chamber. Lara has nearly 20 years of experience leading membership-based nonprofits in the areas of communications, public relations, advocacy, marketing, storytelling, strategic planning, survey research, and membership engagement. She has received numerous awards for her work and helped to lead organizations to record-breaking membership sales, fundraising goals, and program participation.

Passionate about bettering her community, she has served in leadership roles with the Arts Council of Montgomery, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Public Relations Council of Alabama, the Southern Public Relations Federation, Leadership Montgomery, River Region United Way, and the Junior League of Montgomery, often helping them in strategic planning efforts, survey research, membership growth, fundraising efforts, storytelling, and streamlining operations.

She is often featured as a speaker and panelist on topics of building brand and maintaining relevance, prioritizing purpose, and hiring, retaining, and recruiting quality employees. Lara holds a bachelor's degree in Public Relations Communications from Auburn University.