

20 UNDER 40: South Carolina's Rising Stars **THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CLASS**

By: DeVona Mitchell





Members of the Top 20 Under 40 Class were photographed exclusively for the South Carolina Black Pages at the South Carolina State House in Columbia, SC. Missing from the Group photo are Ashley Adams, Shelley "Hank" Bilal, Jamie Brunson, Stania DeJesus, Chaundra Goodwin, and Jasmine Twitty. Photographs by Anthony Montgomery.

South Carolina Black Pages is proud to announce their 25th Anniversary Class!

THEY'RE YOUNG, INNOVATIVE, AMBITIOUS, AND NEXT GENERATION'S LEADERS. FROM MONETIZING THEIR PASSIONS, TO MOLDING THE BRIGHTEST MINDS, TO MAKING SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORY, THIS YEAR'S CLASS IS FILLED WITH REMARKABLE, YOUNG, AMBITIOUS PROFESSIONALS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE.

The South Carolina Black Pages' Top 20 Under 40 is an immensely accomplished group of young men and women who will take the State of South Carolina by storm. The late Heavy-weight Boxing Champion, Muhammad Ali stated "To be a great champion, you must believe that you are the best." The Twenty-fifth Anniversary Class has proven to be among the best and brightest in our state, and will undoubtedly leave their mark nationally and globally. Individually, they exemplify the spirit of new-age leaders, are pillars of the community, and have achieved success in their respective industries.

We look forward to empowering the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Class of the Top 20 Under 40 by helping them grow personally and professionally, expand their network, and continue to be ambassadors of the community. It is our hope that will inspire the next generation of Top 20 Under 40 classes, whether it be through the South Carolina Black Pages or other media and/or corporate entities.

Earlier in the year, we have been accepting nominations via blackpagesosouth.com, in hopes of finding a new class of dynamic young professionals in the South Carolina community. As always, it's been a fun process – with an array of applications received over three months. In our third year, we decided to decrease the number of recipients from 40, which made this the most competitive year in the program. We have no doubt that the future is bright in our great state.

Before the turn of the century, Bill Gates stated that the leaders of the future will be "those who empower others." There is no doubt in our minds, that this class embodies the mission of Thomas Media Group, publishers of the South Carolina Black Pages, which is to "Educate, Empower, and Enlighten the community."

We salute the newest class of the South Carolina Black Pages' Top 20 Under 40. Learn more about them here and read their full biographies at blackpagesosouth.com.



ASHLEY ADAMS

COMPANY: Conflict Resolution Connections
TITLE: Owner/ Director
CITY: Blythewood, SC

Favorite Quote: "We can't become what we need by remaining what we are."

Proudest Career Achievement: I am proud to be a business owner.



2LT JAMES ANDERSON

COMPANY: SC Association of School Administrators
TITLE: Governmental Affairs Intern
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: "It ain't where you start in life, it's what you do with life, that determines where you end up in life." – Gen. Colin Powell

Proudest Career Achievement: Becoming a Second Lieutenant in the Air Force.



RESHIEKA BELL

COMPANY: Fashion Forward Mobile Boutique, LLC
TITLE: Owner/Creative Director
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: "Life is like a camera...FOCUS on what's important, CAPTURE the good times, DEVELOP from the negatives, and if things don't work out, TAKE ANOTHER SHOT."

Proudest Career Achievement: I am extremely proud of being a pioneer in Columbia, SC for introducing a new and innovative approach to service and shopping.



SHELLEY “HANK” BILAL

COMPANY: Hank Bilal Music
TITLE: Musician
CITY: Winnsboro, SC

Favorite Quote: “You can’t win if you don’t play.”

Proudest Career Achievement:
2008 Grammy® Awards.



DR. JAMIE BRUNSON

COMPANY: Fairfield County School District
TITLE: Assistant Principal of Curriculum & Instruction
CITY: West Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “The mere imparting of information is not education” – Dr. Carter G. Woodson

Proudest Career Achievement: I am most proud of being selected by my peers as the 2010-2011 Teacher Of The Year at Lower Richland High School.



MICHAEL COLEMAN

COMPANY: Edward Jones
TITLE: Financial Advisor
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: Financial literacy is an issue that should command our attention because many Americans are not adequately organizing finances for their education, healthcare and retirement.

Proudest Career Achievement: I’m most proud of the fact that I’m able to transform lives. Its truly awe inspiring to know what you do really impacts someone directly. The ability to help my community makes me proud of my career choice.

“There are few stages on the planet that embrace and promote innovation and education like a TEDx stage. To have your idea selected, acknowledged, supported, and promoted is a dream made into reality!” – Julian Nixon



DR. STANIA DEJEUS, D.O.

COMPANY: Family Wellness Center of Charleston
TITLE: Physician
CITY: Charleston, SC

Favorite Quote: “To Whom Much is Given, Much is Required.”

Proudest Career Achievement: Opening my own private practice with a focus on wellness and preventative care; Providing an alternative payment structure that allows for greater access to medical care and improving chronic health conditions.



ANDREA GLOVER

COMPANY: Charleston Southern University
TITLE: Professor
CITY: Goose Creek, SC

Favorite Quote: “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
– Jeremiah 29:11

Proudest Career Achievement: Having my small business be featured in a national magazine, Southern Lady—which has a readership of 500,000.



CHANDRA GOODWIN, LPC, NCC

COMPANY: South Carolina Department of Mental Health
TITLE: Licensed Professional Counselor, National Certified Counselor
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, I used everything you gave me.”
– Erma Bombeck

Proudest Career Achievement: I am most proud of being a second year doctoral candidate at the University of South Carolina and being a Licensed Professional Counselor in both South and North Carolina.



DR. KENDRA HILL

COMPANY: Richland School District Two
TITLE: Elementary School Principal
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” – Dr. Wayne Dyer

Proudest Career Achievement: Earning my promotion to an Assistant Principal position at Bookman Road Elementary School at the age of 26. I served for 7 years before being named the principal of the same school, where I continue to serve students and families today.



LATOYA JEETER

COMPANY: The Chic Staffer/
Columbia College
TITLE: Career Coach
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute”
– Proverbs 31:8

Proudest Career Achievement: Thus far, I am most proud of being awarded The Spirit of Inclusion Award by the Office of Multicultural and Community Affairs at Columbia College.



APRIL LEWIS

COMPANY: Team Healthy Living, LLC
TITLE: Visionary
CITY: Lexington, SC

Favorite Quote: “Get your mind right, get your life right.”
– April M. Lewis

Proudest Career Achievement: Graduating from the University of South Carolina while working full-time and becoming an entrepreneur.



JASMINE MIX

COMPANY: Books With Barbers
TITLE: Founder
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” — Aristotle”

Proudest Career Achievement: Recognition from Governor Nikki Haley and receiving a chaired appointment of Mayor’s Barbershop Books by Mayor Steve Benjamin.



BRIAN MYERS

COMPANY: McCollom-Myers Mortuary & Cremation Service
TITLE: Mortician
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him”

Proudest Career Achievement: My greatest career achievement is becoming a 1st generation funeral home owner at the age of 32.



KATHERINE MYERS, ESQ.

COMPANY: South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
TITLE: Attorney
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! [...] So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing.” – 1 Corinthians 9:24, 26

Proudest Career Achievement: I had the pleasure to train a group of middle school students in the art of Public Speaking. They entered a city-wide Oratorical Contest and one of my students won first place.



I have been blessed to accomplish a lot in my professional career.” – Jamie Brunson



JULIAN NIXON

COMPANY: Make It Plain LLC
TITLE: Founder
CITY: Taylors, SC

Favorite Quote: “All of this amounts to saying that in the final analysis all life is interrelated. No nation or individual is independent; we are interdependent. We are caught up in an inescapable network of mutuality.” – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Proudest Career Achievement: I would have to say that being a presenter for 2016 TEDxGreenville has been one of the greatest moments yet.



MARQUIS SOLOMON

COMPANY: West Columbia Fire Department
TITLE: Chief of Operations
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership.” – Harvey S. Firestone

Proudest Career Achievement: Becoming the first African American appointed to the Executive Board of the SC Fire-fighters’ Association.



HON. JASMINE TWITTY

COMPANY: City of Easley
TITLE: Associate Judge
CITY: Greenville, SC

Favorite Quote: “Do not judge me by my successes, judge me by how many times I fell down and got back up again.” – Nelson Mandela

Proudest Career Achievement: I am most proud of being appointed as an Associate Judge.



A’KETA VASSER

COMPANY: HISBlessedOne LLC and Purposely Driven Life Coach LLC
TITLE: Entrepreneur and Life Coach
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “When a man starts out to build a world, He starts first with himself” ~ Langston Hughes

Proudest Career Achievement: I am most proud of stepping out on faith and starting my first business (HISBlessedOne, LLC) in 2013.



JADA WILLIS

COMPANY: Willis Professional Services
TITLE: CEO & Career Activator
CITY: Columbia, SC

Favorite Quote: “If you don’t like something, change it. If you can’t change it, change your attitude about it.” – Maya Angelou

Proudest Career Achievement: Verizon Wireless selecting me as HR Innovator of the Year.



I was proud to be acknowledged as an educational leader at the age of 24 being named the AVID Director (Advancement Via Individual Determination) at Dent Middle School in Richland School District Two.” – Kendra Hill



I wanted to introduce a unique way of shopping all while being fun, convenient and most of all... **ECONOMICAL!**” – Reshieka Bell