



INSIGHT 2025

SOAR

CONVENTION & EXPO

SOURCE BOOK





PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear NABA Nation,

Welcome to Las Vegas!

I'm thrilled to be with you as we gather to engage in a movement that continues to grow in purpose and impact. This year's theme is **SOAR**. You may recall our journey—first, we learned to *Elevate*, then we found our *Flow*. Now, it's time to take the next step. This week, I invite you to Soar: above the noise, beyond fear, and into the future we are shaping together.

SOAR is more than a theme, it's a call to action. I encourage each of you to shine brightly and, in doing so, inspire others around you to do the same. Together, we turn challenges into opportunities and concerns into catalysts for growth.

A more just world starts with us, beautiful fireflies lighting up the sky. By creating a space where every voice is heard and valued, we not only strengthen our collective impact but also advance real and lasting progress.

I look forward to connecting with as many of you as possible. Please don't hesitate to say hello, grab a photo, and share your experience on social media using @NABAInc. Let's amplify our message and invite others to join this dynamic movement, one that is joyful, visionary, and purpose-driven.

Thank you for choosing to spend these meaningful days with us. Your presence powers our progress.

With gratitude,

Guylaine Saint Juste, SHRM-SCP, CAE

President & CEO, NABA Inc.



WELCOME TO THE 2025 NABA NATIONAL CONVENTION & EXPO

Dear NABA Nation,

Welcome to ***Insight 2025: SOAR***—NABA's 54th annual convention and a celebration of vision, momentum, and leadership. This year's theme reflects more than just progress; it captures our collective elevation—rising higher through talent, innovation, and culture.

Over the past year, we have continued to expand our reach and amplify our impact. NABA is proud to be a platform for talent across accounting, business, finance, entrepreneurship, and beyond—bringing together professionals and partners who are shaping industries and redefining what leadership looks like.

This week's programming has been thoughtfully designed to challenge and inspire. With sessions exploring topics like the power of AI, tax, and cyber tech, we invite you to fully engage—share ideas, ask questions, and make the most of every opportunity to grow and connect.

Thank you to our members, partners, staff, and volunteers whose dedication powers this experience. Together, we are cultivating a culture of excellence that prepares the next generation to lead—and SOAR.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Herschel Frierson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Herschel Frierson
Chair, Board of Directors
NABA Inc.



WHO WE ARE

NABA Inc. is a premier global organization that encourages excellence and gives agency to its members to rise in professional business, financial careers and entrepreneurship. NABA empowers business leaders at every step of the journey to uphold high standards, moral behavior and meritorious service.



WHAT WE DO

We engage, empower, and educate Business Leaders and Institutions by providing a platform to enhance skills and elevate Voice. Our 5 Es: engage, empower, educate, enhance, and elevate. Doing so, we're "lifting as we climb."

WHAT WE DO

We path and pave the way to a more just world, unleashing endless opportunities for growth and advancement so that Business Leaders achieve the best version of themselves at every point of their journey.



WHAT WE KNOW

According to Dr. John Holland, the late American psychologist and the famous creator of the career development model occupational codes, if you expose young students to a broad range of career options early, they will have more information and become more aware of the correlation between education and success... Students who acquire career awareness at an early age are better prepared to engage in rigorous and challenging courses as they progress through school because they have a clearer idea of what their goals are.

It's Never Too Late to Help Students Dream Big, Brownsville





INSIGHT 2025

SOAR

CONVENTION & EXPO

SPEAKERS



AVA DUVERNAY

Award-Winning Director

Ava DuVernay is an Academy Award nominee and winner of the Emmy, BAFTA, Sundance, Image and Peabody Awards. Her feature film directorial work includes the historical drama *SELMA*, which was the first film directed by a Black woman to be nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture. Her criminal justice documentary *13TH*, made DuVernay the first Black woman in Academy history to be nominated as a feature director. She became the highest grossing Black woman filmmaker in American box office history with her direction of Disney's *A WRINKLE IN TIME*.

DuVernay's critically-acclaimed limited series *WHEN THEY SEE US*, for which she wrote, produced and directed all episodes, received sixteen primetime Emmy nominations. Her series *QUEEN SUGAR* became the longest running Black family drama in television history in its seven seasons.

Winner of the 2012 Sundance Best Director Prize for her micro-budget film *MIDDLE OF NOWHERE*, she was the first Black filmmaker to be awarded the top prize in the festival's history. With her most recent film, *ORIGIN*, DuVernay broke ground as the first African-American woman director to compete in the world's oldest festival in its 90 year history. DuVernay amplifies the work of people of color and women of all kinds through her narrative change studio, *ARRAY*, winner of the 2021 Peabody Institutional Award.

She sits on the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, representing the directors branch in her second term, as well as holds positions on the boards of the Director's Guild of America and American Film Institute.





BILL DUFFY

Head of Basketball with WME Sports and former Chairman & CEO of BDA Sports Management

Bill Duffy as Head of Basketball with WME Sports and former Chairman & CEO of BDA Sports Management, which was founded over 35 years ago, is one of the most successful and respected agents in professional sports.

Along with the agency, he currently represents more than 40 NBA players and has represented hundreds of professional basketball players internationally.

Throughout his career he has and continues to represent current stars including, Luka Doncic, Anthony Edwards, Chet Holmgren, Jalen Williams, Scottie Barnes, RJ Barrett, Brandin Podziemski, Zion Williamson, Sabrina Ionescu, as well as Hall of Famers, Steve Nash and Yao Ming, and retired stars, Rajon Rondo, Antonio Davis, Joakim Noah and Goran Dragic.

He was a standout basketball player at Santa Clara University after starting his career at the University of Minnesota. He was selected in the 5th round of the 1982 NBA Draft by the Denver Nuggets and in 2003 was inducted into SCU's Athletic Hall of Fame.

Bill and his wife, Jameese, live in Walnut Creek, California and have five children.





EVVIE MCKINNEY

Singer & Entrepreneur

Influenced by the fabled and fertile Memphis music scene, Evvie McKinney's unique merging of good ol' gospel vibes, current pop sensibility and deep-rooted soul has her perfectly positioned for international acclaim. And she has no doubt that God has planned exactly that for her: "I've been called a 'superstar' since I was in diapers," she laughs with a humble confidence. She is now well on her way, having won the inaugural season of the voice competition, "The Four" on Fox Network and then following that up in 2021 with her first #1 radio hit, "Just Like God," from her debut EP, *This Is Evvie McKinney*, which earned her Stellar and KLOVE Fan Award nominations. Growing up, Evvie was surrounded by a large and devout family. Her mother's determination and unwavering faith filled their home with an expectation of divine intervention. In fact, her large family was actually able to build their home by entering a Habitat for Humanity contest. Amazingly, her mother's letter was chosen from 20,000 entries. Miracles are still happening for singer/songwriter Evvie McKinney. From the age of seven, Evvie was singing at services and on holidays at her home church, and at "every other church around Memphis." In 2015, when she was only 14, Evvie moved to New York to go on the road with her brother's band, Gideon Luke and The People, touring nationally and internationally. On *The Four: Battle for Stardom*, with judges Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, DJ Khaled and Meghan Trainor, Evvie stunned the country with her otherworldly stage performance of "Proud Mary." According to Evvie, "I went into beast mode," she says laughingly. "I had sung that song since I was five years old, but I just let God use me that night. I really wanted to win, but I knew it would take more than just singing. I had so many emotions going, it was amazing. But I knew that God was going to make it happen." P. Diddy also ended up producing her first single, "HowDo You Feel?" Pop star Meghan Trainor has cowritten Evvie's Motown Gospel debut single, "Bring The Whole Hood", a joyful, giant shot of positivity and inclusivity with a soul/pop/gospel groove and the true story about Evvie's loving family. Evvie truly wants to "Bring The Whole Hood" along with her on her exuberant journey...or as she sings, "when I make it, we make it." Perfect timing. Perfect message.





FAWN WEAVER

CEO & Founder, Grant Sidney, Inc. and Uncle Nearest, Inc.; NYT Bestselling Author; Certified Corporate Director; and Board Member, Endeavor Group Holdings

Fawn Weaver has been a serial entrepreneur for more than 25 years. As the CEO and founder of Grant Sidney, Inc., she continues to grow her multimillion-dollar real estate and investment portfolios. Weaver is a popular TED speaker, a USA Today and two-time New York Times best-selling author, and has appeared in hundreds of popular magazines, radio, and morning shows around the world, including FOX Business, The TODAY Show, The New York Times, CBS This Morning, Good Morning America, CNBC, and The Washington Post. Her revealing How I Built This segment with Guy Raz on NPR had the internet abuzz for months, as did her 2024 Forbes Self-Made Woman profile.

Weaver is one of only five African American women to found and lead a \$1B+ company in U.S. history. She serves as the CEO of Uncle Nearest, Inc., a company she founded in 2016. Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey is the fastest-growing American whiskey brand in U.S. history, the best-selling Black American-founded spirit brand of all time, and was the most award-winning Bourbon of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The super-premium brand has earned more than 1,200 awards and was named "World's Best" two years in a row. Her 458-acre Nearest Green Distillery is the seventh most visited distillery in the world.

She is certified as a Corporate Director by Harvard Business School, graduated summa cum laude from the University of Alabama, and holds an honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Bluefield State University. She serves on the board of Endeavor Group Holdings (NYSE: EDR).





FINESSE MITCHELL

Actor, Stand-up Comedian & Author

Finesse Mitchell has been seen almost everywhere. One of the funniest standup comics working today, the Saturday Night Live alum, (known for characters like Starrkeisha, 50 Cent and Morgan Freeman) is currently on Hulu's History Of The World Part II playing the Rev. Jesse Jackson opposite of Wanda Sykes. He's guest-hosted for The Wendy Williams talk show on Fox. He's a guest judge on Netflix's, "Is It Cake?", and a favorite celeb guest on Pictionary. Mitchell's other television and movie credits include Disney Channel's A.N.T. Farm (China's Dad), NBC's Kenan, Fox's Outmatched and I Can See Your Voice, the movies Who's Your Caddy, Mad Money and OWN Network's holiday movie, The Great Holiday Bake War, Showtime's Roadies, and TBS Tyler Perry's Meet The Browns. During late-night, you might have seen him on The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, The Late Show with Seth Meyers, The Arsenio Hall Show, and Comic's Unleashed just to name a few.

Finesse has four one-hour comedy specials titled, "Snap Famous", "One Man Monster", Showtime's "The Spirit Told Me To Tell You" and 2023's self-produced "Slightly Offensive" under his belt.

Born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, Finesse graduated from the University of Miami and is a distinguished member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated. He is also a former student-athlete who was a walk-on for the National Champion Hurricanes football team where he played Hurricane greats like Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Warren Sapp, and Ray Lewis. Finesse entered the comedy scene in 1999 with appearances on BET's Comic View and Comedy Central.





SCOTT PELLEY

Award-Winning 60 Minutes Correspondent,
Author, Truth Worth Telling & Former CBS
Evening News Anchor and Managing Editor

After covering the most compelling and historic stories of the last 40 years, 60 Minutes correspondent and former CBS Evening News anchor and managing editor Scott Pelley is one of the most recognizable faces in American journalism today.

Pelley has been reporting for 60 Minutes, America's number one news program, for nearly 25 years. During that time, half of all the major awards won by 60 Minutes have been for stories he has reported. His reporting for 60 Minutes has taken him to the battlefields of Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and also includes news-making interviews with presidents, kings, and global celebrities. He captured the nation's attention with exclusive interviews of President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, as well as his interview with President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine, which took place in Zelensky's blacked-out bunker near the beginning of the Russian invasion.

Pelley previously served as anchor and managing editor of the CBS Evening News from 2011 to 2017. In that time, he made the storied flagship of CBS News the fastest growing evening news broadcast in America and grew the broadcast by an additional 1.5 million viewers.

Pelley's is also the author of the book, Truth Worth Telling, which offers a collection of inspiring tales, reminding us of the importance of values in our uncertain times. Exclusively represented by [Leading Authorities speakers bureau](#), Pelley provides audiences with his expert and insightful perspective from a career on the front lines of history.

Throughout his illustrious career, Pelley has been honored with a record 51 Emmy Awards, four prestigious duPont-Columbia Awards, three George Foster Peabody Awards and the Walter Cronkite Award among many others.

Critical reviews. The Washington Post wrote, "Pelley's tenure has been marked by his intelligent, truth-seeking approach to the news, pulling no punches while still remaining impartial." The Columbia Journalism Review called Pelley, "The most well-qualified and proven television journalist ever to ascend to the anchor job." Variety praised his, "Genuine gravitas and commitment to his craft" while the Washington Times wrote, "The legacy of Edward R. Murrow lives in the daring, long-range investigations of Scott Pelley." Salon.com said, "He restores a little of our faith in TV news while performing hugely-important, world-bettering reports along the way."





JUSTIN J. PEARSON

District 86 State Representative - Tennessee
General Assembly

Justin J. Pearson serves as State Representative for District 86 in Memphis, Tennessee, and is the second-youngest member of the Tennessee General Assembly. He was born the fourth son of five sons to teenage parents Kimberly Owens-Pearson and Jason C. Pearson Sr. who later earned master's degrees in Education and Divinity, respectively. His mother is a teacher and father is a preacher and chaplain at the Veterans Administration. Pearson is engaged to Oceana R. Gilliam, MPP, who is currently pursuing a law degree.

Elected to office Jan. 24, 2023, at the age of 28, Tennessee Republicans expelled Pearson from office for protesting gun violence on the House floor as a member of the famed "Tennessee Three" following a tragic school mass shooting in Nashville, TN. Pearson delivered a thought-provoking, soul-stirring speech during his expulsion trial that was broadcasted worldwide, moving people across the nation and beyond. He won back his seat in a special election three months later, amassing nearly 94 percent of the vote. Pearson serves as a national thought leader on justice and democracy, appearing on CBS, ABC, NBC, MSNBC, CNN, NPR and in the Washington Post, New York Times and Rolling Stone.

Prior to public service, Pearson co-founded the environmental and climate justice nonprofit Memphis Community Against the Pollution (MCAP). Through his leadership, MCAP successfully defeated a multi-billion dollar crude oil pipeline project that would have poisoned Memphis's drinking water for one million people and stolen land from South Memphis residents. Pearson has more than a quarter million followers on Twitter ([X](#)) and [Instagram](#) and 57,400 on [TikTok](#). Pearson's advocacy and courageous leadership inspired The Truman Center to present him the [2024 Award for Exceptional Moral Courage in Public Service](#) to honor his unwavering commitment to morality and advocacy for gun control reform, despite personal risk and political condemnation.

Justin J. Pearson was elected State Representative for District 86 in Memphis, Tennessee January 24, 2023. Tennessee Republicans soon after expelled him as one of the Tennessee Three when he protested their inaction following a tragic school mass shooting. Voters quickly reelected Pearson with 94 percent of the vote. Known for his oratory gifts, Pearson is a justice warrior and democracy champion who organizes, mobilizes and activates People Power. He co-founded Memphis Community Against Pollution in 2020, an environmental and climate justice nonprofit that defeated Big Oil and the Byhalia pipeline, a multibillion dollar project that threatened the Memphis Sand aquifer.





MARVONIA "MARVY" PEARSON MOORE

Ms. Moore held a variety of senior management positions at AT&T throughout her 37-year career until retiring in April 2021 as Vice President and General Manager for AT&T's \$2b revenue portfolio, generated primarily through 300+ retail locations and 1k+ employees in Georgia and South Carolina. Previous AT&T roles include Market Development (aligned with the AT&T's partnership with Disney), Region Vice President and Vice President - Customer Care, VP for Business Sales organizations and, outside of AT&T, as a Region VP for WW Grainger, Inc.

In May 2021 Ms. Moore launched a new consulting practice, Verticality Concepts, to provide resources to small businesses, non-profits and career professionals on the development and execution of growth strategies. On May 3, 2021, Ms. Moore was appointed as an Independent Director for Atlanta based The Aaron's Company where she served initially on the compensation committee and the nominating and governance committees. She most recently served on the audit and nominating and corporate governance committees until the company was acquired in October 2024. Her role as a Director has been recognized in Savoy Magazine's 2021 Most Influential Black Corporate Directors issue and Women Inc's 2023 issue.

Ms. Moore's current leadership positions in the Atlanta community include serving on the boards of National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) – Atlanta Chapter, Women in Golf Foundation and the North Metro Atlanta Chapter of SCORE (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization/resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration). Her work with SCORE was recognized in Savoy Magazine's July 2023 issue to encourage more black mentors to serve as volunteers. She previously served on the boards of Atlanta Technical College (Chair), Morehouse College (Trustee), Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (Chair), Atlanta Partners for Education, Central Atlanta Progress and Georgia 100 Mentor Exchange. Ms. Moore also served as a director on the corporate board and compensation committee for Minneapolis based Ault, Inc. prior to the sale of the company. Her career started after graduating with dual Bachelor of Arts degrees, English and Speech Communications, from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC. A journalist at heart, Ms. Moore successfully made the pivot to a STEM career in technology and continues to be known by many professionals and businesses as a mentor and career coach. She received Special Recognition at the Black Engineer of the Year Awards 2015 STEM Conference.

Ms. Moore and her husband, James, are avid golfers and enjoy spending time with family and traveling. They are both South Carolina natives and support many collegiate and professional sports programs as spectators. Their daughter, Mykala Walker, is a sports industry professional, most recently serving as the Women's Basketball Assistant Coach and Recruiting Coordinator for Arizona State University and their son, Mychal Walker, Jr. is the founder and CEO of BluXMedia, LLC, a photography and videography business based in metro Atlanta.



MYKALA WALKER

A standout basketball athlete turned accomplished sports industry professional, Mykala Walker, has established herself as a leader in corporate, collegiate, and venue disciplines, seamlessly bridging the worlds of sports management, recruiting, and business development. With a wealth of expertise in marketing, sales, and operations/talent management, she has collaborated with major corporate and collegiate brands to drive revenue growth, investment value, and brand sustainability.

Her accolades in basketball are accentuated by an extraordinary high school career, where she led her team to the Georgia High School State Tournament for the first time in over 30 years and the first Final Four in school history, demonstrating her ability to rally teammates, perform under pressure, and deliver results in high-stakes environments.

At Wake Forest University, she earned a Bachelor's degree in Communication with a minor in History, honing the skills necessary to lay the foundation for her future in the sports industry. She later expanded her expertise by earning a Master of Professional Studies in Sports Industry Management from Georgetown University, preparing her for leadership roles that seamlessly integrate athletic and business objectives.

Her coaching career has been marked by success at both Mid-Major and Power 5 Conferences, where she has played a pivotal role as a recruiting coordinator and position coach for post players. Most recently serving at Arizona State University (2022-2025), she recruited elite-level basketball talent for the PAC-12/Big 12 Conference roster, securing high-level athletes from Power 5 programs, mid-major schools, and the JUCO ranks—without the benefit of NIL resources or school-backed collectives.

Previously, as an Assistant Coach and Recruiting Coordinator at the University of Delaware (2017-2022), she played an integral role in securing a Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) Conference and Regular Season Championship and advancing her team to national prominence. Her efforts in player development, scouting, and recruiting contributed to Delaware ranking #1 in Division I Offensive Rebounding, as well as producing professional-caliber athletes, including a WNBA draftee and overseas professionals.

Beyond coaching, her business acumen has extended to roles with the Atlanta Hawks, Turner Sports/NBA TV, and All In PR, where she excelled in marketing, branding, and strategic partnerships. Whether managing six-figure recruiting budgets, executing high-profile sales campaigns, or leveraging data-driven scouting analytics, her expertise reflects a rare blend of athletic insight and corporate proficiency.

Passionate about empowering student-athletes and growing the game, Mykala continues to make an impact in sports business, education, and talent development—proving that success in basketball extends far beyond the court. When she is not navigating the sports world, she enjoys traveling around the globe, playing golf and spending time with her friends and family.





SHAN COOPER

Founder and Chief Executive Officer Journey Forward Strategies, LLC

Journey Forward Strategies is a solutions- focused consulting firm that specializes in leadership development and organization effectiveness. Working with Fortune 500 corporations, private companies, and the not- for-profit sector, Shan leverages over 30 years of diverse experience and expertise to deliver sustainable results for her clients. She excels in the areas of executive coaching, leadership and culture development, and well as business transformation. Shan works at the intersect of the business and people strategies. She believes a successful business strategy is most effectively executed when a sound people strategy exists. In essence, Mission First. People Always. Shan currently serves as a senior advisor to McKinsey & Company. Prior to her time as a senior advisor, she served as an executive coach for the company. Shan is the former Executive Director for the Atlanta Committee for Progress (ACP). The ACP was founded in 2003 to serve as the Mayor of Atlanta's external advisory board with a mission to provide leadership on key issues important to economic growth and inclusion for all Atlanta citizens. The committee includes more than 40 highly engaged corporate chief executive officers, university presidents and civic leaders who offer expertise in service to Atlanta and its future development.

Shan is the former Chief Transformation Officer of WestRock and was responsible for developing infrastructure capabilities and system processes needed for business growth in a fast-paced merger and acquisition environment. She also led the Recycling and Waste Services Division comprised of 22 recycling plants across the U.S, supplying materials to a diverse customer base and international markets. In addition, Shan led the Enterprise Logistics, Global Procurement, and Information Technology organizations.

Prior to joining WestRock, Shan served as the Vice President and General Manager of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company. In this role, she was responsible for the 6,000 employee operations in Marietta, GA; Meridian, MS; and Clarksburg, WV, which designs, produces, modifies, and maintains military aircraft for the United States and countries around the world. Marietta programs included the C-130J Super Hercules, F-22 Raptor, P-3 Orion, C-5M Super Galaxy and the F-35 Lightning II. During her tenure, Shan simultaneously served as the Vice President of Business Ethics for the Aeronautics Division.

Prior to her role as a General Manager, Shan served as Vice President of Human Resources for Lockheed Martin Corporate, as well as the Aeronautics and Information Systems & Global Solutions Divisions. In addition, she served as the first Corporate Vice President of Diversity and Equal Opportunity Programs for Lockheed Martin.

Shan currently serves on the corporate Board of Directors for Intercontinental Exchange, Inc., Southern Company, and SouthState Corporation. In addition, she serves on the Board of Directors for Grady Health System and the Board of Trustees for Emory University. Shan is also on the Board of the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI), Georgia Historical Society, Georgia Music Accord, and is a member of the Atlanta Rotary Club and a Life Member of the Board of Councilors for The Carter Center.

Shan was inducted into the 2024 JA Atlanta Business Hall of Fame, named the 2022 National Philanthropy Day Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year and was awarded the Atlanta Business Chronicle's 2021 Women of Influence Lifetime Achievement Award; named Georgia Trend Magazine's 2015 Most Respected Business Leader; the 2015 Woman of the Year by American Association of University Women; as one of Georgia Trend Magazine's 100 Most Influential Georgians in 2012 - 2016, 2020 and 2021; and as one of Atlanta Business Chronicle's Power 100 in 2019 - 2021. She was also named one of Black Enterprise Magazine's Most Powerful Executives in Corporate America in 2017.

Shan earned a bachelor's degree in Biology and Religion from Emory University and a Master of Business Administration from the Roberto Goizueta Business School of Emory University. In addition, she holds an Executive Master's Degree in Global Human Resources from Rutgers University.





TISHA CAMPBELL

Actress & Singer

Tisha Campbell began her expansive career at the tender age of three, successfully spanning 5 decades in all genres of show business, including singing, acting, directing, producing, and writing. Campbell is currently making appearances with George and Mayan Lopez on NBC's "Lopez Versus Lopez," while simultaneously on Showtime's "Uncoupled," playing opposite Neil Patrick Harris and Campbell is also proud to be a featured artist in two shows airing currently on Netflix — The animated series "Good Times" and the new sitcom "Act Your Age," which remained in the top ten it's premiere week. Campbell is best known for her role opposite Damon Wayans on the ABC hit series "My Wife and Kids," and as Gina on the iconic, successfully syndicated, "Martin Show." Both of these sensations have earned her a NAACP Image Award for Best Actress in a Comedy Series and the BET Comedy Award.





VALORIE BURTON

CEO, Coaching and Positive Psychology
(CaPP) Institute

Valorie Burton, life strategist and international speaker, is CEO of the Coaching and Positive Psychology (CaPP) Institute. Her life-changing message has an intriguing, research-based emphasis in the pioneering field of applied positive psychology - the study of what happens when things go right with us. Her company provides coaching, coach training, and resilience training and has served clients in all 50 states and 37 countries on six continents. Since 1999, she has written 14 books translated into multiple languages, including *Let Go of the Guilt*, *It's About Time*, and *Successful Women Think Differently*. She has appeared regularly on the TODAY Show, CNN, Dr. Oz, and Essence, and has spoken for hundreds of organizations around the globe. She was named one of the top 60 motivational speakers in America and one of the Top 100 Thought Leaders in the field of personal development. For over 15 years, Valorie's books, speaking engagements, and coaching programs have helped people: - Make major life changes that are exciting and scary at the same time. - Be happier and have more fun, even when life seems routine. - Become strong leaders, navigate office politics, and achieve professional dreams. - Navigate setbacks and disappointments in a way that makes life better, not bitter. - Speak up with confidence rather than settling for less. - Go to sleep at night feeling at peace about decisions. - Conquer emotions that cause procrastination, emotional spending, and self-sabotage. She and her husband Jeff live on a ranch south of Atlanta with their children.





WAYNE M. HEWETT

Board Director and CEO

Wayne M. Hewett currently serves on the board of directors of The Home Depot, Inc, Wells Fargo, and UPS. Since 2018, he has served as a Senior Advisor to Permira, a global private equity firm. In addition, he serves as the Chairman of Quotient Sciences, a pharmaceutical drug development and manufacturing accelerator, and Lead Director of Hexion, a leading global provider of adhesives and performance materials solutions, both since 2023. He also serves as Chairman of Cambrex, a life sciences company that provides products and services for small molecule active pharmaceutical ingredients, since 2020. From 2015 to 2017, Wayne was CEO of Klöckner Pentaplast Group, a packaging company. He was president and CEO of Arysta LifeScience Corporation, which at the time was one of the world's largest privately held crop protection and life science companies, from 2010 until Arysta's acquisition by Platform Specialty Products Corporation in 2015, where he served as president for 6 months. Mr. Hewett's career has also included more than 20 years with General Electric Company, including as vice president, GE Supply Chain and Operations; president and CEO of GE Advanced Materials; president and CEO of GE Silicones; president of GE Plastics Pacific; president of GE Toshiba Silicones; and member of GE's Corporate Executive Council. He served as Chairman of DiversiTech Corporation, a leading aftermarket manufacturer and distributor of HVAC products, from 2018 to 2021. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Industrial Engineering from Stanford University.





DJ JAZZY JEFF

Renowned DJ, Music Producer,
& Entrepreneur

DJ Jazzy Jeff is a renowned DJ, music producer, and entrepreneur with a thriving career that spans more than three decades. Jeff's rich legacy in music includes a DMC Championship, an EMMY Award, multiple GRAMMY Awards, American Music Awards, and NAACP Image Awards and nominations. Introduced to the world as one half of DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince, his accomplishments extend beyond his multi-platinum, Grammy-winning collaborations with Will Smith. Notable is his acclaimed production company, A Touch of Jazz, credited for work with Michael Jackson, Jill Scott, Darius Rucker, and more. In 2015, he founded the PLAYLIST Retreat, an invitation-only event that brings artists together to inspire, motivate, and fuel collaboration.

Prior to 2020, DJ Jazzy Jeff performed all over the globe and chronicled his travels in his Vinyl Destination web series. And when a global pandemic forced the world into lockdown, Jeff moved the party, literally, in-house with his signature livestream series, The Magnificent House Party.





DJ EMPIRE

Renowned Afrobeats and Amapiano DJ

DJ Empire is a renowned Afrobeats and Amapiano DJ based in Toronto, known for his unmatched mixing skills and his ability to curate some of the city's most unforgettable events. With a passion for African music and culture, DJ Empire has built a reputation as one of the top DJs in the urban music scene, captivating audiences both locally and internationally.

Starting his DJ career in 2010 in Malaysia, DJ Empire played a pivotal role in introducing and growing African music in Southeast Asia, particularly in the realm of Afrobeats and Amapiano. His early years in Malaysia helped lay the foundation for his distinctive sound, blending infectious rhythms and melodies that would eventually take over global dancefloors.

In Toronto, DJ Empire quickly became a sought-after DJ, playing at major concerts, clubs, and festivals. His extensive experience includes spinning for global superstars such as Davido, Burna Boy, Diamond Platnumz, and Kizz Daniel, making him a staple at major African music events in the city. Whether at an intimate concert or a high-energy festival, DJ Empire's performances never fail to deliver an electrifying atmosphere.

DJ Empire has graced prestigious stages around the world, including AfroNation, AfroFest, All Star African Music Fest, and African Fashion Week, where his sets bring an infectious energy to every crowd. In addition to his success in Toronto, DJ Empire has toured across Canada, Nigeria, and East Africa, connecting with fans worldwide and sharing his passion for African music.

Always at the forefront of the African music scene, DJ Empire continues to push boundaries, bringing the vibrant sounds of Afrobeats and Amapiano to new heights. His dedication to showcasing African talent and culture through music has earned him a spot as one of the most respected DJs in the industry today.





MIKE ELLISON

Actor, Recording Artist, &
Emmy® Award-Winning Producer

Mike Ellison is an actor, recording artist, and an Emmy® Award winning producer. Born to parents living and working in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia before the family relocated to Reston, Virginia where he was raised, Mike fully realized himself as an interdisciplinary artist in Detroit. Mike's acting credits span film, theater and television, including appearances on CHICAGO FIRE and CHICAGO PD. With a Communications Degree from the University of Virginia, Mike began his career in sports marketing and public relations. He utilizes the creative arts as a vehicle for cultural collaboration, community and corporate engagement, and charitable endeavors throughout the United States and his birth country. His boutique agency, Wendemé Creative, provides a range of creative strategy, content and production services to select companies and organizations. Mike's father, the late journalist Bob Ellison, was the first African American president of the White House Correspondents' Association.





BARRINGTON LEVY

Reggae & Dancehall Artist

Barrington Levy's outstanding career as a top-class reggae vocalist began more than two and a half decades ago. Called reggae's 'Mellow Canary' by virtue of his strong, pure vocal style, he's renowned as the first original singer of the dancehall era, inspiring many imitators en-route. Barrington was born in West Kingston, but spent much time as a youth in Clarendon, where he developed his signature riff by experimenting with different vocalizations and bouncing the sounds off the surrounding hills. As a youth, his biggest influence was Dennis Brown, but he also liked Michael Jackson, the original Jackson 5, and other American R&B artists. He began performing in dance halls at age 14 in a band that he formed with his cousin Everton Dacres, called Mighty Multitude. In 1975, Barrington recorded his debut track "My Black Girl" with the Mighty Multitude. During these early performances, his singing was often informally recorded and sent to places in England and the U.S. The first foreign release, "A Ya We Deh", was followed by a major hit with "Collie Weed", produced by Junjo Laws for Jah Guidance, and others like "Twenty-One Girls Salute" and "Mind Your Mouth". Producer Henry "Junjo" Lawes discovered him singing on a local sound-system, and wasted no time in taking him to Channel One for the first of many hit singles in 1979. With the Channel One All-Stars - later to form the nucleus of the Roots Radics - laying the rhythms, and Scientist mixing the finished results at King Tubbys, the new singer caused a sensation right from the start, ushering in the dancehall phase at the same time.

Those early singles "A Yah We Deh", "Shine Eye Gal" and "Moonlight Lover" were later collected on his debut album Bounty Hunter which appeared on the Jah Life label in the States. The follow-up Englishman on Greensleeves established Barrington as the reggae star of the early '80's, spawning hit singles with "Sister Carol", "Look Youthman", "Eventide Fire A Disaster" and "Mary Long Tongue". Again Junjo was the producer, and the third album Robin Hood only served to maintain his already rocketing reputation. In 1983, Levy made a big splash in Great Britain with "Under Mi Sensi", a tune that spent 12 weeks topping their charts. The tune quickly made its way to the States where it became an instant hit. "Under Mi Sensi" also became the basis for the 1985 dancehall mega-hit "Under Mi Sleng Teng" - primarily credited to Wayne "Jammy" Smith (although Barrington actually created the melody). Levy's initial live appearances in England created a sensation, his astonishing self-confidence in his singing talent on stage at venues like the influential "100 Club" in London, enabling him to have audiences in the palm of his hand. With a plethora of original material and an outstanding, immediately recognisable voice, Barrington simply could not fail, having hit after hit for not only Junjo but also Alvin Ranglin (Life Style), Delroy Wright (Live & Learn Presents Barrington Levy & Beres Hammond) and in 1984 George Phang's Powerhouse label, who released the Money Move album to critical - and dancehall - acclaim. That same year Junjo produced Prison Oval Rock which took the reggae world by storm.

Barrington had also shown himself to be a creditable producer in his own right, releasing one track "Deep In The Dark" on his own BL label, but this situation was to prove short-lived. Help came in the shape of Paul Love, aka Jah Screw, who had been the selector for U-Roy's King Sturgav sound-system in Jamaica before teaming up first with dee-jay Ranking Joe as a producer, then on his own. Their first release together was "Under Mi Sensi", a formidable and decidedly heavyweight cut which found Barrington wailing with a power and depth unequalled before or since. Immediately the song became a classic, staying in the reggae charts for weeks on end.



It was closely followed by "Murderer" for Jah Life, and then Barrington and Jah Screw's "Here I Come" in 1985 which was a national chart-hit through a major label deal with London Records - ultimately leading to his first UK TV appearances, where he sang the pro-ganja anthem "Under Mi Sensi" on Number 73 (a children's television show!). After the excitement of a national hit, it was to be nearly two years before Barrington rediscovered his winning touch. When the break did come it was for Black Scorpio in Jamaica with a song called "She's Mine", after which he once again joined forces with Jah Screw for a delightful cover of Bob Andy's Studio One hit "Too Experienced". It was a masterful move; not only did it serve to re-establish Barrington on the reggae market but prompted a rash of other versions which dominated the reggae scene in 1991. This success inspired Mango Records to sign him that year, releasing the Divine set to favourable reviews. "Dancehall Rock", again with Jah Screw became a notable hit but increasingly Barrington was relying on quality covers and new versions of old hits rather than concentrating on the self-penned material that had made his name. It was a formula repeated on his 1992 set Turning Point, again for Jah Screw and released by Greensleeves. The voice was as immaculate as ever, and the choice of songs impeccable: "Desperate Lover" and "Unchained" were again Bob Andy compositions; "Warm & Sunny Day" originated from his early days with Junjo Lawes but a standout track was "Something In My Heart", a duet with Reggie Stepper that made fierce inroads into the reggae charts on single release. The next chapter of his distinguished career came as a surprise to his many fans, who'd remained convinced that a next national chart hit couldn't be far away given his talent as both singer and songwriter. After a stunning performance on the 1993 Sunsplash, he signed to MCA and promptly began work on an album with Sly & Robbie in Jamaica. The first single, "Work" was a revelation; Barrington delivering an uplifting cultural message over an infectious dancehall bogle riddim which seemed a certainty to follow Chaka Demus & Pliers' "Tease Me" into record charts world-wide. It was not to be; after selling by the cart-load on pre-release the record company were unable to capitalise on the initial interest. The resulting album Barrington, encompassed many eclectic styles, all beautifully sung but to no avail. Nothing's Changed and then Vice Versa both suffered a similar fate and for the time being, his chance had gone. Interestingly, Barrington revived his own Lipstic label and had produced artists like Pinchers and Jigsy King.

The next step came from the past, thanks to inspired remixes of "Two Sounds" and "Under Mi Sensi". First came hardcore ragga remixes from original producer Jah Screw, who invited dee-jay sensation Beenie Man to chant like fury over those revamped heavyweight riddims alongside Barrington's classic vocal tracks. Ever mindful of the grassroots audience, Screw got the balance exactly right. Both these tunes were subsequently transformed into jungle anthems. By the summer of 1994 furious drum breaks had been welded to reggae bass lines and jungle music had taken the world by storm, with "Under Mi Sensi" creating a sensation in it's new guise. Within a few months - despite his high profile on the underground - Barrington left MCA due to artistic differences. Loyal to his favoured artist as ever, Jah Screw began work on Duets - a whole album of remixes - overdubbing the hottest dee-jays from Jamaica onto further classic vocal tracks. These included former single "Looking My Love" with Cutty Ranks, the aforementioned "Under Mi Sensi" and "Two Sounds" (with Beenie Man), as well as cuts of "Living Dangerously" (with Bounty Killer), "Struggler" (with Reggie Stepper), "Don't Run Away" (with Spragga Benz), and a remix of "Here I Come", now a massive combination featuring Mega Banton.

He came back larger than life with Bounty Killer on the song "Living Dangerously" - undisputedly the biggest reggae song of 1996, both in Jamaica and the United States, and for months held the #1 spot on the dancehall charts worldwide. In 1998 the album Living Dangerously was released on Breakaway Records, and features tracks with Snoop Doggy Dogg, Bounty Killer, Lady G, Jigsy King, Terror Fabulous, and others. Barrington was lifted to the top of the charts, and continues to stay at the top of play lists on every radio station in Jamaica, and dancehalls throughout the world. Throughout his professional appearances, Barrington has shared the stage with a veritable who's-who of the reggae and world music scene: Alton Ellis, Ken Boothe, Dennis Brown, John Holt, Gregory Isaacs, Freddie McGregor, Maxi Priest, Shaggy, Beenie Man, Buju Banton, Bounty Killer, Stevie Wonder, Whitney Houston, Lady Saw, Lady G, U2, Snoop Doggy Dogg, Shine, CeCile, Tony Rebel, Garnet Silk, Capleton, Sugar Minott, Coco Tea, Spanner Banner, Little Kirk, Sanchez, Papa San, Mutabaruka... just to name a few. Barrington continues to record and tour extensively throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, and remains Jamaica's #1 headliner. He's currently working on his latest (soon to be released) album, It's About Time, featuring Jamaican hip-hop sensation CeCile, on the hit single "Want You To Know". Barrington Levy is still "Broader than Broadway"; and still a major force on the dancehall scene !!!





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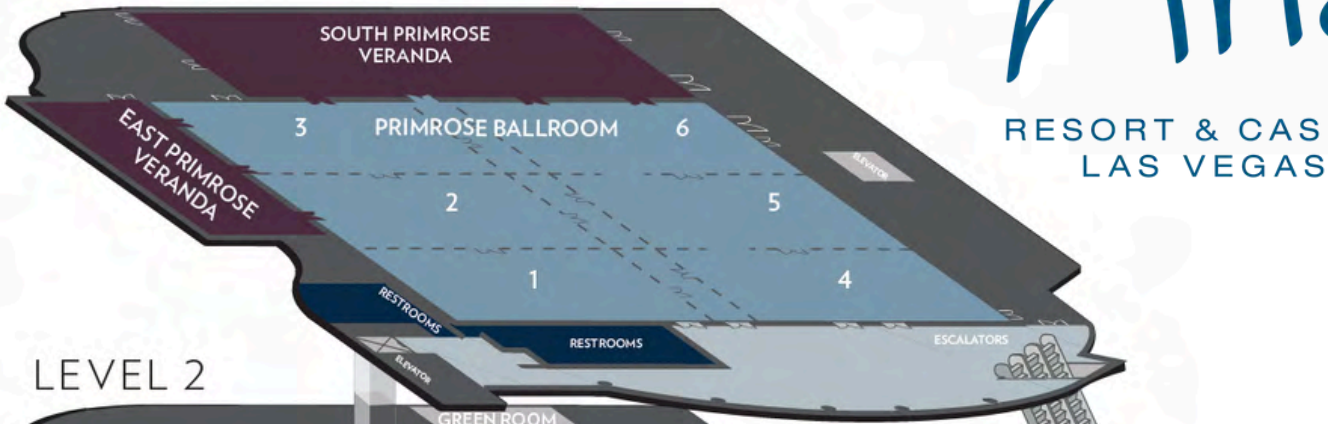
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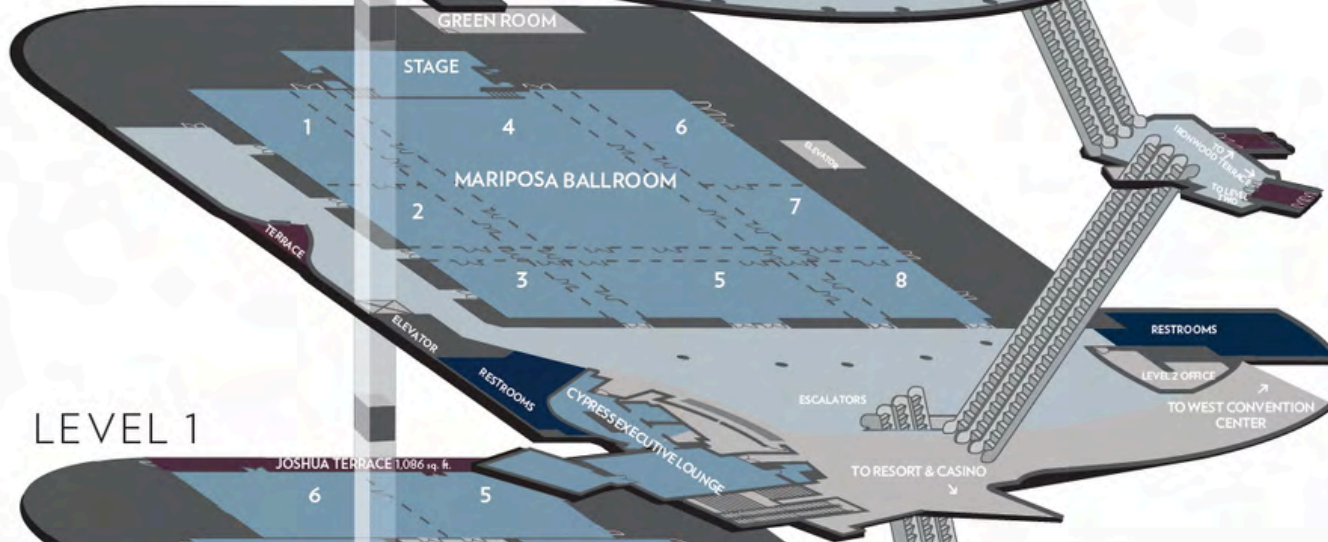


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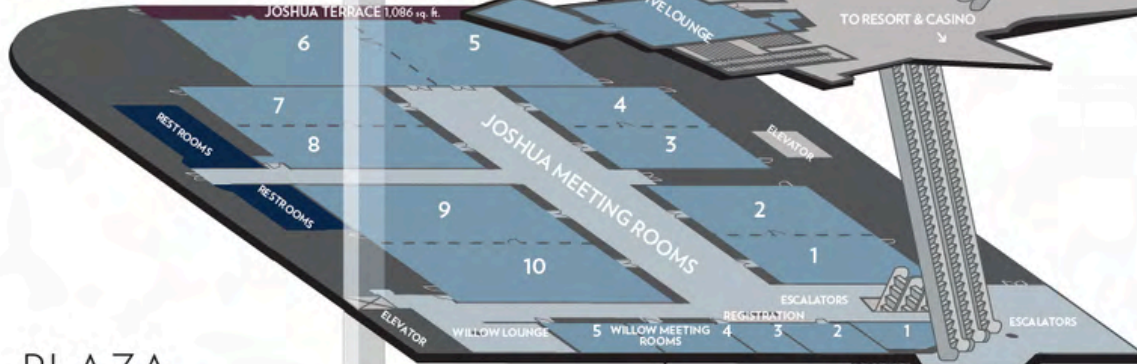
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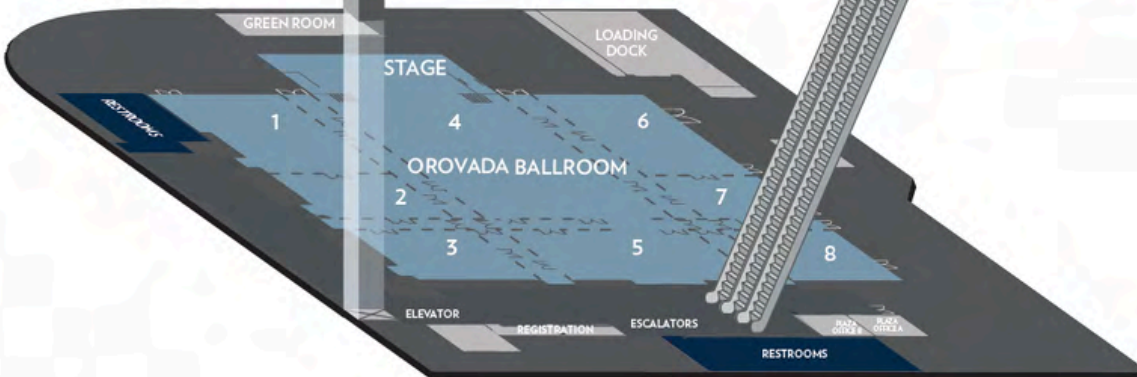
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A photograph of a woman and a young girl. The woman is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored headwrap with orange, blue, green, and yellow patterns. She is smiling and looking down at the girl. The girl is laughing heartily, her mouth wide open, showing her teeth. She is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. They are sitting on a light-colored, patterned sofa. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

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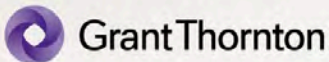
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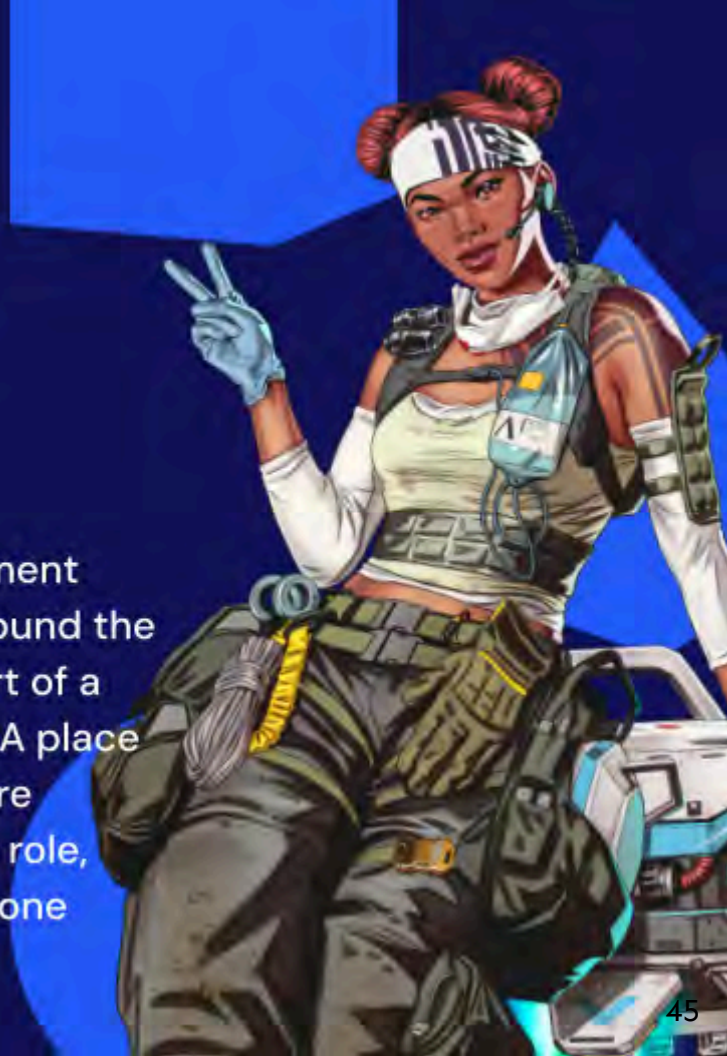


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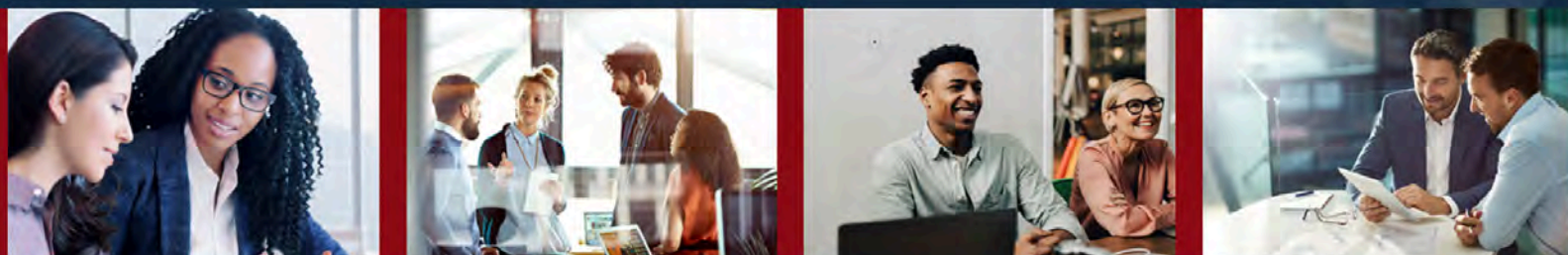
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