



OCTOBER 1, 2026 SPEAKERS

State of City Support

Accelerating Business Growth & Economic Opportunity



HOST

MARCI COLLIER OVERSTREET

Atlanta City Council President

Marci Collier Overstreet is a lifelong public servant and Southwest Atlanta native. She currently serves as Atlanta City Council President, following her tenure representing the citizens of District 11. A product of the Atlanta Public Schools system, Marci plays a central role in guiding the legislative direction of the City of Atlanta. She presides over Council meetings, helps set the legislative agenda, appoints committee leadership, and works to build consensus among Council members to ensure effective governance. In this role, she serves as a key liaison between the City Council, the Mayor's Office, and Atlanta's residents—advancing policies that reflect community priorities while upholding transparency, accountability, and collaboration. Marci is focused on supporting safe neighborhoods, sustainable economic development, and equitable opportunities across the city. She continues to advocate for strategic investments in technology, innovative public safety strategies, and responsible stewardship of public resources.



ANTIONETTE BALL

CEO & Founder, Women's Entrepreneurial Opportunity Project, Inc. (WEOP)

Antionette Ball is a visionary nonprofit leader, program innovator, author, and advocate dedicated to advancing women's economic power. As one of the Founders of the Women's Entrepreneurial Opportunity Project, Inc. (WEOP), she has spent more than two decades developing innovative programs, cultivating strategic partnerships, and creating pathways to drive economic progress for women. Under her leadership, WEOP has built a powerful network of corporate, government, financial, academic, nonprofit, and community partners working together to expand economic opportunity and create meaningful community impact. WEOP has received numerous recognitions from the U.S. Small Business Administration's Georgia District Office, multiple commendations from the Georgia House of Representatives and the prestigious Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award, recognizing exemplary and innovative community development work.

**KIM GREENE HUGHES, ESQ.****Founder, CEO, K.G. Hughes & Associates**

Kim Greene Hughes, Esq. is the principal attorney and owner of K.G. Hughes & Associates, LLC, a law firm she founded in 2006 to provide exceptional legal counsel with integrity, personalized service, and a commitment to community. For nearly 30 years, Kim has represented individuals, families, businesses, lenders, investors, nonprofits, and government entities throughout Georgia in real estate, corporate law, and estate planning. Recognized as Invest Atlanta's Top Closing Attorney for five years and honored with Atlanta Housing's 2025 Building Futures Award, she also serves as Special Assistant to the Attorney General, representing the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in affordable housing transactions statewide. Kim is currently a board member of the Women's Entrepreneurial Opportunity Project, the Empire Board of Realists, and Focused Community Strategies.

**LESLIE COHEN****Atlanta Restaurateur, Founder of Firepit Pizza Tavern & Birdcage**

Leslie Cohen is an Atlanta native and winner of the Food Network's Cutthroat Kitchen. She has brought pride and passion to her career as a restaurateur, which started at a young age. She studied Culinary Arts at Johnson & Wales. Leslie spent 11 years growing her ability to lead as the General Manager of Roasters. With a niche for branding, Leslie spent 3 years developing her first concept and finally opened Firepit Pizza Tavern in June of 2018. With the success of Firepit, she opened her second concept, Birdcage. Both restaurants are thriving and located in the community of Grant Park.

**TONYA HICKS****President/CEO, Power Solutions, Inc.**

Tonya Hicks, an accomplished leader, and trailblazer in construction, energy, and promoting women's empowerment. As the President and CEO of Power Solutions, Inc., Managing Principal of Women Do Everything, LLC, and Founder/President of she-EV, Inc. Tonya has made significant contributions in several male-dominated industries. With a passion for excellence, Tonya's journey began as she broke barriers, becoming the first woman to become a Journeyman Inside Wireman Electrician in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Local 917 and the first Black Woman to become an IBEW Journeyman Electrician in the State of Mississippi.

**KIM SCHOFIELD****Georgia State Representative, District #63**

State Representative Kim Schofield serves the citizens of House District 63, which includes areas of Southeast Atlanta, East Point, College Park, Forest Park and Hapeville. She was elected to the Georgia General Assembly in 2017 and currently serves as Secretary of the Urban Affairs Committee. Kim's professional career spans across healthcare, financial, transportation, education and nonprofit agencies. Kim has more than 15 years of experience in consulting, coaching, teaching, training workshops and engagement seminars, bringing alignment within political, corporate, community, law enforcement, healthcare and faith-based organizations.

**PAMELA J. SMITH****President and CEO, Smith Real Estate Services**

As President and CEO, Ms. Smith is responsible for all aspects of the firm's operations including financial management, marketing, business development, project administration and management. Guided by her vision and leadership, SRES has experienced consistent growth, since 1984, and it has become nationally known for its technical capabilities. The firm has successfully managed real estate projects throughout the southeast, Washington, D.C., and in the Caribbean. The projects range in scope from project management services for multi-million dollar, mixed-use development projects; due diligence services for loan assets sold in the secondary mortgage market; and land acquisition services for infrastructure and greenspace programs; and construction management services for 5.4 billion dollar Airport Improvement Program. Ms. Smith currently serves on the Board of Director's for the Women's Entrepreneurial Opportunity Project, Inc. in Atlanta.

**DR. TOPE MITCHELL****Invest Atlanta, Director of Technology and Entrepreneurship, Executive Director of the Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative**

Dr. Mitchell is a sociologist, technology executive, award-winning entrepreneur, and strategist advancing innovation, economic development, and inclusive growth. She is the Director of Technology & Entrepreneurship at Invest Atlanta, leading efforts to attract, retain, and grow technology companies, and as Executive Director of the Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative (WEI), the nation's only municipally funded accelerator for women founders. She also represents Invest Atlanta in collaboration with the City of Atlanta's Office of Technology and Innovation. She is also CEO and co-founder of Reflekt Me, a VC-backed retail technology company helping brands increase engagement and conversion through inclusive personalization.



SHANNON H. LONGINO

CPM®, HCCP, CMH, CMO, Senior Vice President, Truist

Shannon H. Longino has been in the industry for more than thirty (30) years and has an extensive leadership background in Affordable Housing, Multi-Family, Property Management and Asset Management. Her expertise has expanded in the oversight of diverse multimillion-dollar portfolios throughout the East Coast and Midwest Regions of the United States. Shannon is a native of Atlanta and was the youngest Member to serve on the Eastlake Planning Committee as she collaborated with her grandmother, Eva Davis, who was the original Catalyst that initiated the redevelopment of East Lake Meadows. She's devoted her life and time to continuing her Grandmother's Legacy for service by advocating for underserved Families. Her work and advocacy have translated into more than \$1.2 billion dollars of capital used to developed affordable homes and supportive services for more than 10,000 underserved families in communities across Atlanta, the state of Georgia, and the nation.



DR. KIM CARTER EVANS

Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Trufund

Dr. Kim Carter Evans is the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of TruFund Financial Services, Inc., a national Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), where she provides executive leadership for the organization's enterprise operations, strategic growth, and organizational performance. With nearly 23 years of experience in business, community, and economic development, she is widely recognized as a thought leader in community finance, economic mobility, organizational leadership, entrepreneurship, and equitable economic development. During her tenure at TruFund, Dr. Carter Evans has helped secure more than \$65 million in philanthropic, federal, corporate, and private-sector investments supporting small business lending, entrepreneurial education, equity investment, and business advisory services for thousands of entrepreneurs.



DR. LAKEYSHA "KEY" HALLMON

EdD, Founder & CEO, The Village Market & Executive Director, Our Village United

Dr. Key is a transformational social entrepreneur, speaker, civic leader, and author of No One Is Self-Made. Dr. Hallmon is reshaping the future of economic power by building ecosystems where small businesses thrive and communities flourish. She is the founder of The Village Market, Our Village United, The Village Retail, and Village Books, enterprises that have supported thousands of small businesses, facilitated over \$10 million in direct sales, delivered services to entrepreneurs valued at over \$15 million, and deployed more than \$1 million in

grants and technical assistance. Her retail model spans high-foot-traffic locations including Ponce City Market in Atlanta and an upcoming storefront at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.
