



## PRESS RELEASE

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# 2023 Georgia Minority Business Awards The Year of “Entrepreneurs & Partnerships”

ATLANTA, GA -- On March 16, 2023 at 6:00PM at the Georgia International Convention Center (GICC), the Georgia Minority Business Awards (GMBA) will host their *25th annual awards dinner* to celebrate minority businesses and entrepreneurs from around Georgia who are making an impact within their perspective business communities. The speakers, CEO's, minority business winners and scholarship recipients represent the best in success and exhibit business ethics and values nationally.

Our awards committee recognizes these superior qualities in performance, citizenship, leadership, ethical behavior, diversity and teamwork. These individuals share their philosophy for putting customers first and increasing the value of their companies which make their work-place a great place to work. Additionally, they have had a tremendous impact on the City of Atlanta and the State of Georgia.

Greeters for the evening includes Mayor Andre Dickens, City of Atlanta, Lakita Backum, CEO of the Ecovert Wallet, Elliot Wang, Director General of Taiwan, Elise Durham, Assist. General Manager, Business Diversity, Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, and Dr. Jose Marquez-Leon, President and CEO of Tech Latinos.

### ***This year, we are focusing on youth that are doing amazing things:***

We are highlighting Chris "CJ" Almond who is truly a minority in his sport. He has the "Need For Speed" and it's the love, exhilaration, and passion for feeling empowered when he is driving that continues to help him WIN. CJ is a 16-year-old with lots of determination; Racing is in his blood! He is one of the most skilled, determined, and fastest upcoming drivers in motorsports you will ever meet. As he continues to race and build a name for himself INEX racing at Atlanta Motor Speedway, his ultimate goal is to be a future NASCAR driver.

Tucker High School students will showcase their skills featuring their Robotics program. It is a robotics engineering program designed to equip students for work and advanced study in robotics and robotic technology. At Tucker High School, students learn modeling, design, programming and control of robotic platforms, and gain a solid understanding of real-world applications of computation, sensing and actuation. The program also provides students with a foundational knowledge of computer science, mathematics, physics and engineering, including mechanical engineering.

In partnership with Business Development Initiative, Inc. (BDI), which is an entrepreneurial school for youth in high school and middle school, we encourage the students to attend colleges and universities that focus on International Studies, and Engineering partnership programs that promote future employment opportunities and corporate growth in Georgia.

As we continue to diversify the GMBA Awards and honor some of the most astute entrepreneurs, it is very important that we connect on our digital platforms. Please visit: [YouTube.com/@creedunlimited](https://www.youtube.com/@creedunlimited)

What began as merely a vision has turned into a successful annual awards event which businesses and entrepreneurs look forward to being a part of each year. Many thanks to Creed W. Pannell, Jr. for his follow through with the vision and commitment to the leadership of the GMBA.

The Year of the Entrepreneur and Partnerships is a theme worthy of repetition and recognition.

“I started these award celebrations to simply acknowledge and congratulate local and small business men and women entrepreneurs who are trendsetters in their own right,” shared Founder and Executive Director Creed W. Pannell, Jr. “Planning to work the plan you create, is merely a good idea; working the plan to work for yourself – makes you an entrepreneur.”

**GMBA will honor the following individuals:**

1. **JOHN LU INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Joseph Hsaoi, President & CEO of H Restaurant Group and the Flying Biscuit
2. **ENTREPRENUER OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Marie Lee Driver, CEO of the Ozone International Pet Expo
3. **CEO OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Rick Ross, CEO of the WingStop Franchise
4. **CREATOR OF TECHNOLOGY DIGITAL PLATFORM OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Farah Allen, CEO and Founder of The Labz
  
5. **GEORGIA LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD** - The honorable Park Cannon of the 58th District
6. **CREED PANNELL, JR. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** - Hyoung Gwen Park, CEO of BeautyMaster and the BeautyMaster Scholarship Foundation
7. **HERITAGE AWARD** - Hilda Abbott, Founder & CEO of Rudhil Companies
8. **YOUTH IN TECHNOLOGY OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR ROBOTIC TECHNOLOGY** - William Hicks, Educator at Tucker High School in Tucker, GA
9. **HOME BUILDER OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Shawn Vincent, CEO and Founder -Extra Mile Service, Inc.
10. **COMMISSIONER OF THE YEAR AWARD** - The Honorable Khajah Abdur Rahman, Fulton County Commissioner
11. **ECONOMIC DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Maceo Rogers, Economic Director for the City of East Point
12. **CORPORATE DIVERSITY OF THE YEAR AWARD** - Johnny Brown, Corporate Personal Finance Manager Kroger Corporation (Atlanta stores)

**About the Georgia Minority Business Awards:**

The Georgia Minority Business Awards is mandated to evolve and effect change to sustain and propel the vision in this 21st century. The awards sponsoring magazine, the Atlanta Business Journal and ABJ Digital are proud to serve as a catalyst for a new generation of business owners which notably serve as a valuable trend indicator in “Building Cultural and Global Relationships.”

We embrace diversity, overcome cultural obstacles and continue to build global relationships. The amalgamation of minds forms partnerships thus creating common ground for success and achievement.

The names, Atlanta Business Journal and Georgia Minority Business Awards reflects our dedication to help generate awareness about the positive changes and the collective successes of the multi-cultural communities and we look forward to continuing to share and recognize those collective successes for years to come.

**GMBA Dinner**

**Date: March 16, 2023**

**Time: 6:00**

**Location: Georgia International Convention Center (GICC)  
2000 Convention Center Concourse, Atlanta, GA 30337**

**For tickets, please visit**

<http://gaminoritybusinessawards.com/>