

# Technology Association of Georgia Bridge Builders



## FY23 IMPACT REPORT

Larry K. Williams, *President/CEO*  
Dr. Loretta Daniels, CDP, *Interim Executive Director*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Message from the CEO/President.....	3
A Message from the Director.....	4
Mission/Vision & Top Five Strategic Goals.....	5
FY23 Highlighted Accomplishments.....	6
What Bridge Builders Does.....	7
Bridge Builders Leadership and Advisory Board .....	8
Quotes from the Social Justice & Equity Taskforce.....	9
Phase I - Pilot Programs Workforce Development	
TAG Succession Planning for Tech Leaders .....	10
Mid-Level/Senior-Level Advancement Mentorship.....	11
Mentorship Impact.....	12
Registered Tech Apprenticeship.....	13
Bridge Builders & SkillStorm Technology Certificate	
Training Scholarships.....	14
Black Tech Resume Database.....	15
Phase I - Pilot Programs - Entrepreneurship Growth	
TAG Connect.....	16
TAG Invest Connect.....	17
Getting Involved.....	19
Press Coverage.....	20
TAG Invest Connect Attendee Survey Responses.....	21
2023 Bridge Builders Impact Awards.....	22
Looking Ahead in 2024.....	27



Impact Report Designed by:  
Win Cawthorne



**LARRY K WILLIAMS**  
CEO & PRESIDENT, TAG

*"In our drive for a more inclusive and equitable future in Georgia's tech landscape, we introduced Bridge Builders, an innovative Social Justice & Equity Program. More than just a program, it embodies our commitment to dismantling barriers hindering progress and diversity.*

*With less than 5% of Georgia's businesses being Black-owned and only 23% Black representation in the tech workforce compared to 32% of the population, Bridge Builders stands as our proactive response to these and other troubling disparities. This initiative aims to unite the technology and business community in a collaborative effort to foster meaningful change.*

*As highlighted in this year's impact report, Bridge Builders has enjoyed remarkable success, making significant strides in its mission to create lasting change and cultivate a future where everyone can thrive."*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

## Creating Pathways

*"I am pleased to share an update on the remarkable progression of Bridge Builders, an initiative close to my heart as the director. Our vision for a more inclusive and equitable tech landscape in Georgia is being realized through strategic planning and execution.*

*Through meticulous development, our team successfully implemented our Phase I Pilot Programs. These pilots were not only successful but also proved to be scalable models. The positive outcomes we witnessed in these initial phases have reinforced our commitment to driving meaningful change.*

*Bridge Builders is more than just a program; it's a testament to the collaborative spirit of the technology and business community. As we move forward, we are inspired by the overwhelming embrace and support from our community and corporate partners, and look ahead with determination to expand our impact. Together, we are creating a future where diversity and equity are at the forefront of Georgia's tech ecosystem."*



**DR. LORETTA DANIELS**  
DIRECTOR, BRIDGE BUILDERS



## Mission & Vision

The Technology Association of Georgia is dedicated to removing the walls impeding progress and diversity in Georgia through the strategic goals and initiatives developed by Bridge Builders. Bridge Builders is a Social Justice & Equity initiative designed to bring the technology and business community together to drive change.”

### FY23 Annual Goal - 250 Pathways By

**1.**

Creating and launching a tech succession planning program focused on inclusive promotion to senior-level positions.

**2.**

Providing access for tech entrepreneurs to gain access to funding.

**3.**

Providing a platform to help Black tech entrepreneurs with access to customer acquisition.

**4.**

Providing TAG corporate partners with access to Georgia's top Black tech talent resume database.

**5.**

Developing a registered tech apprenticeship program to help corporations fill in-demand diverse tech talent.

# 1. Received Approval as a Registered Tech Apprenticeship Sponsor



# 2. Successfully Launched Two Programs - TAG Connect and TAG Invest Connect to Create Pathways for Entrepreneurs to Gain Access to Capital and Customer Acquisition

# 3. Enrolled 156 Mentees and Mentors into the Black-Tech Mid-Level to Senior Level Mentorship Program



# The Bridge to More Innovative Inclusion

The goals are clear and attainable. Bridge Builders aims to create a more equitable technology workforce that is representative of our population. Specifically, in the next five years, Bridge Builders wants to advance 1,000 Black people in technology careers through:

- Helping people gain the right skills
- Connecting entrepreneurs with needed resources
- Promoting career paths in technology

Bridge Builders advocates for minorities to achieve higher level management and executive jobs through TAG member companies, public advocacy, and programming.

**5-Year  
Goal**

**1,000  
Tech Careers**

## LEADERSHIP & ADVISORY BOARD

## Creating Pathways



**Mike Neumeier**

Owner, Principal  
& CMO  
Arketi Group



**Jeffery Buzzelli**

SVP & GM  
Comcast Business



**Keyla Cabret-Lewis**

VP, DEI  
Aflac



**Dr. Loretta Daniels**

Director  
TAG Bridge Builders



**Cherie Fuzzell**

Senior Director  
Apple



**Catina Wilson**

Head of Strategy Operations &  
Enablement - Innovation  
Growth & Strategic Partnerships  
Optum



**Louis Gump**

President  
Digital Current, LLC



**Stephen D. Hassett**

Technology  
CEO/President



**Ron McMurtrie**

Chief Commercial  
Officer  
Honeywell Connected  
Enterprise



**Krish Shetty**

VP- Product Development &  
Engineering  
Deluxe



**Michael Sullivan**

Vice President & CIO  
Southern Company Gas



**Kyle Tothill**

Managing Director &  
Partner  
eHire



**Larry K. Williams**

TAG  
President & CEO



**Michael Sullivan**

Co-Chair, Social  
Justice and Equity  
Task Force

*"The ability to be in tune with that community and adapt as the landscape around us changes is something that TAG has set the standard for support with a vision and mission statement they hold themselves accountable to. TAG took a bold stance and created a Social Justice & Equity task force I was honored to be co-chair of. The results of that committee's hard work was the foundation of Bridge Builders. Two years later this program led by Dr. Loretta Daniels has leapt into community engagement and produced great wins focusing on Black Tech professionals within the state of Georgia. It is truly impressive and will be a gamechanger for inclusivity for years to come."*



**Stacie Hagan**

Chief People Officer &  
Operations Leader

*"As a TAG member for many years and past board member and chair, I've experienced how TAG opens doors to new business insights and opportunities and incredible relationships with tech professionals across the state. Those doors must be open and welcoming for all technology professionals. Serving as co-chair of the Social Justice & Equity task force, with the full support of TAG's board, offered a means to take action on that belief and ensure Georgia's technology community thrives through genuine inclusion that inspires innovation."*



**Mike Neumeier**

APR, CEO of Arketi Group

Co-Chair, Social Justice  
and Equity Task Force

*"Arketi is committed to doing whatever we can to strengthen and expand our innovation ecosystem. Bridge Builders is a catalyst for change in our tech-driven community, opening doors and creating new opportunities for technology professionals and leaders in Georgia."*



# TAG SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR TECH LEADERS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

15

PARTICIPANTS  
ENROLLED

300%

10

COMPANIES  
REPRESENTED

333%

Bridge Builder launched the TAG Succession Planning for Leaders Certificate Program to help corporations identify and support their existing high-potential future tech organizational leaders to ensure leadership continuity and help to achieve the organization's strategic goals.

Building a solid leadership pipeline in the technology sector requires integrating cultural inclusion and nurturing and developing talent at all stages in an organization's business plan. Succession planning is the most effective technique for ensuring individual preparation and future growth.

*Dr. Daniels and team, thank you for the outstanding learning!*

**Jeffrey Augustino**

*Flexile Capacity Systems,  
Delivery Manager II  
TEKsystems*



fiserv.

TEKsystems  
Own changedeluxe  
traded payments & business technology

STAND 8

IDEMIA

GT GreenbergTraurig

Honeywell

Georgia State  
University

COX

# **BLACK TECH MID-LEVEL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

**156**

**MENTEES/MENTORS**

**104%**

**GOAL ATTAINMENT**

**This mentorship program is designed to provide mentees with the opportunity to build a relationship with and learn from senior executives.**



**Mentors have the opportunity to share their learned and lived experiences to help mid-level Black tech professionals advance in their careers.**

## MENTORSHIP IMPACT

### MENTOR

*"My mentee continues to make progress. First meeting with my other mentee was quite promising."*

*"The sessions are going great. My mentee is taking the feedback and running with it...and asking for more."*

*"Diverse group with a lot of perspectives to share with each other, we are having an amazing time!"*

*"Great first session with one of my mentees. My mentee and I clicked very well and hopefully, I was able to help her begin this process smoothly. I look forward to working with my two mentees over the next 6 months."*

### MENTEE

*"My mentor is guiding me in the right direction based upon my goals."*

*"My mentor is keeping me on track with my personal development and with my goals. I have received a promotion and he is guiding me on how to update my profile and begin networking as well as some continued education goals."*

*"My mentor has a wealth of information, willing to share, offers small assignments to channel focus and goal setting, and is insightful."*

*"Really enjoyed meeting my mentor! He took the time to share his story and then to listen to my needs. We are already setting goals with a plan for our time together and I'm looking forward to his insights."*

## TESTIMONIALS

# TAG Tech Apprenticeship

## Program Overview

Our unique Tech Apprenticeship program provides a straightforward, step-by-step track to in demand jobs. The tech industry is seeking to embrace diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in its workforce, and Bridge Builders is proud to lead the way.



Registered  
Apprenticeship



# **BRIDGE BUILDERS & SKILLSTORM TECHNOLOGY CERTIFICATE TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS**

**TAG Bridge Builders and SkillStorm are committed to promoting equity and diversity in the workforce.**

**Applicants are invited to apply for this scholarship, tailored to serve minorities in Georgia looking to advance their tech careers!**

**Successful applicants will receive a full-ride scholarship for their preferred tech certification course, including the exam voucher.**





# **BLACK TECH TALENT RESUME DATABASE**

In collaboration with IBM® and ThisWay® Global, Bridge Builders has established a strategic partnership to offer members a cutting-edge talent acquisition solution. The database leverages IBM Watson Orchestrate digital worker and ThisWay's platform, enabling TAG users to seamlessly identify and recruit qualified diverse tech talent.

This innovative approach streamlines workflow, enhances organizational diversity, and ensures that top candidates are promptly identified for every job. TAG's initiative marks a significant step towards breaking down barriers and advancing Black tech talent in the workforce.

***\*In Development\****

**279**  
**RESUMES  
MATCHED**



## **TAG CONNECT**

Black tech entrepreneurs presented their business models to enterprise leaders, with Home Depot and Comcast serving as host sponsors. The shark-tank-style format facilitated direct engagement with decision-makers, fostering partnerships for long-term success.

This initiative empowers Black tech entrepreneurs by providing visibility, access to valuable procurement opportunities, and creating vertical connections. Georgia's Black tech businesses strive for sustainability and industry diversity, contributing to mutual innovation and growth.

**2**  
EVENTS

**12**  
ENTREPRENEURS

**14**  
BUYERS

**200**  
ATTENDEES

---

**100%**  
GOAL ATTAINMENT

**PRESS COVERAGE**



## **TAG INVEST CONNECT**

**\$15K**  
**COMPETITION**

**PRIZES**

**90**  
**ATTENDEES**

**50**  
**INVESTORS**

**TAG INVEST CONNECT is an annual event that connects Black tech entrepreneurs with the opportunity to pitch to investors looking for innovative startups.**

**This event is open to Black technology business start-ups stages ranging from pre-seed to seed.**

**An exclusive event connecting investors with Black tech entrepreneurs. These early-stage Georgia-based startups will have an opportunity to connect with 40+ top-tier investors in this dynamic event.**



## TAG INVEST CONNECT WINNERS

Creating Pathways

### \$10k First Prize Winner



**Marcus King, Co-Founder/CTO**  
**Lavni, Inc.**

### \$5k Second Prize Winner



**Andre Peart, CEO**  
**Untapped Solutions**

### First Prize Sponsor



### Second Prize Sponsor





**Larry McHugh**

Investor, Atlanta Technology  
Angels

Chair, TAG Invest Connect

*"Invest Connect was a great opportunity for early stage Black Tech entrepreneurs to meet with well established investors. I was honored to co-chair this event where six under-represented founders had the opportunity to present to a room full of forty venture capital and angel investors. This competition resulted in two leaders receiving non-dilutive cash awards. Invest Connect is part of TAG's Bridge Builders program, which is focused on closing the gap in opportunities for underserved entrepreneurs."*

*"I thoroughly enjoyed my time as Co-Chair of TAG Invest Connect. My reason for serving as co-chair was to create pathways to investment for the top black venture scalable founders in Georgia. By facilitating TAG's inaugural Invest Connect, we introduced these founders to an audience of the top investors, managing directors and tech executives in Georgia, giving these founders the type of critical exposure underrepresented black founders typically lack. I am truly thankful for the opportunity to serve in this capacity as Co-Chair and I look forward to remaining engaged with TAG in 2024 and beyond."*



**Avoilan Bingham**

General Manager,  
Drive Capital

Co-Chair, TAG Invest Connect



# hypepotamus

**MEET THE STARTUP WINNERS FROM INVEST CONNECT, A PITCH COMPETITION FOR DIVERSE FOUNDERS**  
by Maija Ehlinger November 13, 2023



# TAG INVEST CONNECT ATTENDEE SURVEY RESPONSES

Creating Pathways

## INVESTOR RESPONSES

100%  
Yes

Did this event provide you the opportunity to have access to innovative minority tech businesses?

100%  
Yes

As an Investor, did you have an opportunity to connect with any of the attending entrepreneurs?

Avg.  
Response  
Rate  
4.25

How would you rate your experience from 1-5?

## ENTREPRENEUR RESPONSES

100%  
Yes

As an entrepreneur, were you able to network with investors in attendance?

Avg.  
Response  
Rate  
4.67

How would you rate your experience from 1-5?

TAG Bridge Builders Impact Awards honor individuals who have engaged in building bridges that create pathways to successful tech careers or business ownership through passion and innovative change.

These leaders have had a profound impact on Georgia's Black tech workforce and entrepreneurial landscape. We are honored to celebrate their commitment.



## 2023 BRIDGE BUILDERS IMPACT AWARDS

Creating Pathways



# STACIE HAGAN

CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER &  
OPERATIONS LEADERS



**BRIDGE  
BUILDERS**  
SOCIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY

## 2023 BRIDGE BUILDERS IMPACT AWARDS

Creating Pathways



# STEVE HASSETT

TECHNOLOGY  
CEO/PRESIDENT





## 2023 BRIDGE BUILDERS IMPACT AWARDS

Creating Pathways



**Honeywell**

# RON MCMURTRIE

**CHIEF COMMERCIAL  
OFFICER**



**BRIDGE  
BUILDERS**  
SOCIAL JUSTICE & EQUITY

## 2023 BRIDGE BUILDERS IMPACT AWARDS

Creating Pathways



# MICHAEL SULLIVAN

RETIRED CIO  
AND VP



2024 is the year of *Strategic Inclusion*. Research shows that inclusive and diverse thought produces innovation. Phase II of the Bridge Builders business model includes expanding our reach to create pathways to generational wealth for disadvantaged Georgians through access to tech careers and business growth.

Our vision for 2024 is geared towards creating a positive impact and driving meaningful change in the tech community. Focusing on strategic inclusion in the tech industry is essential for creating a more inclusive and profitable environment.

Our next phase includes these innovative tech workforce and business growth solutions:

- Increasing the number of participants in the Mid-Level to Senior-Level Mentorship Program for professional advancement to senior leadership roles.
- Strengthening our commitment to helping Georgia's employers take new and innovative approaches to filling the tech-talent pipeline with AI-matched resumes
- Providing our TAG Corporate members with non-traditional tech talent through the TAG Registered Tech Apprenticeship candidates, which touts an 89% retention rate
- Offering AI coaching to pre-seed and seed-disadvantaged entrepreneurs to prepare business plans and loan preparation
- Expanding TAG Connect to include a Corporate-Business Mentorship platform

*The support from our investors has had a significant impact on the well-being of those we assist – we sincerely appreciate your kindness and generosity!*



4400 North Point Pkwy #155, Alpharetta, GA 30022  
Main Number: (404) 817-3333  
[www.tagonline.org/bridge-builders/](http://www.tagonline.org/bridge-builders/)

