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Tapped as the University of Georgia's next president, Jere Morehead has always risen to a level of excellence

By Lee Shearer

University of Georgia law professor Paul Kurtz never pictured Jere Morehead as a future UGA president when Morehead was a young lawyer in the making in the late 1970s.

Still, Morehead made an impression. “I certainly saw a very bright, very engaged, very hard-working and talented individual,” Kurtz said.

Morehead didn’t see himself as a higher education leader either, or a higher education anything.

After graduating from law school in 1980, he worked as a federal prosecutor, then decided to take a break in 1986 to spend a few years in academia as a professor of business law in UGA’s Terry College of Business.

“I thought I’d stay a few years and go back (to law). I liked (academia) a lot more than I thought I would,” said Morehead, whom the Board of Regents tapped this year to replace Michael Adams as UGA’s top administrator on July 1.

But from that year on, his career seems to have been an almost unbroken arc to a university presidency.

Almost from the start he was an outstanding teacher, recalled colleague and mentor Peter Shedd, a retired UGA business faculty member.

“He’s got some presentation skills that he probably honed in the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and they carried over into the classroom,” Shedd said. “I think that was probably the initial thing that impressed all of us.”

But Morehead was more than good; he went on to win the Josiah Meigs Award, the top honor UGA gives for teaching.

“You don’t get the Meigs unless you’re really, really good,” said former UGA law school dean David Shipley.

“He is the kind of professor who prides himself on keeping in touch with his former students and they love him,” said Kurtz, now an associate dean in the law school.
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Employees of A.C.T. Home Care, Inc. receive ongoing training and education in the area of home care services. The staff of A.C.T. Home Care, Inc. embodies respect, dignity, integrity, honesty, diligence, and compassion in all of their encounters with clients and others.

Among the services that A.C.T. Home Care, Inc. offers is medication management, home infusion therapy, skilled nursing care, personal support services such as feeding, bathing, grooming, toileting, oral care and dressing, homemaker services such as light housekeeping, meal preparation, laundry and errands and respite care, giving temporary relief for the primary caregiver.

A.C.T. Home Care, Inc. can arrange services for a client for as little as one hour or as many as 24 hours per day. There are short and long term services that are available seven days a week, including holidays.

The administrative offices of A.C.T. Home Care, Inc. are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM and are located at:

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"Jere was as good a teacher as I've ever had in the classroom," said former student Mark Lewis. "He cared about it. He didn't act like he wanted to be somewhere else. He expected people to be prepared and he came the same way."

After serving as Lewis' teacher, Morehead became his coach after Lewis got his UGA undergraduate degree and entered law school.

When Morehead became a UGA professor, he also became adviser to the law school's moot court team, which argues cases during mock trials in competition with teams from other universities. Lewis was part of UGA's first national championship team in 1991.

"Like a lot of coaches, I think Jere expects the best from the people he works with, and he sets a fine example," said Lewis, who knows a thing or two about coaches.

Lewis was a snapper on UGA football teams of the late 1980s, is the son of former UGA football defensive coordinator Bill Lewis, and is a long-time sports business executive who is now the NCAA's executive vice president for championships and alliances.

"He instills confidence," Shipley said.

Morehead was also an outstanding researcher, Shedd said. The author of numerous books and articles, Morehead was co-author with Shedd and others of "The Legal and Regulatory Environment of Business," the standard text in the field. He was also editor-in-chief of the American Business Law Journal, the primary journal in his academic field.

But soon after Adams took over the UGA presidency in 1997, Morehead was drawn into administration, and liked it.

"You have the ability to solve problems," he said. "I like to solve problems and make things better."

Adams made Morehead acting executive director for the Office of Legal Affairs in 1988 after the sudden departure of the former head. A key recommendation for the post may have come from Julie Carnes, a colleague in the U.S. Attorney's Office who remained a friend and is now chief judge in Georgia's Northern District U.S. District Court.

"It was clear pretty quickly that he had a really keen analytic sense, combined with a lot of common sense," said Carnes, who has remained a close friend. "He's a great problem-solver. He could see all the different layers and ramifications. He's very practical, very good at balancing interests."

After that came stints as director of the UGA Honors Program, vice president for instruction and vice provost for instruction. Since 2010, he has been provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, UGA's top academic officer and chief operating executive.

For several years, he was UGA's faculty athletic representative, seeing UGA's athletic programs from the inside, which was one more bit of experience that will help him as UGA president, Shedd said.

"I think every new responsibility Jere got was an opening into fur-
NASHVILLE, TN--(Marketwired - May 1, 2013) - Waller, Nashville's oldest and largest law firm, today announced the addition of 17 new attorneys to the following key practice groups:

- Corporate (one partner and four associates):
- Finance & Restructuring (two associates):
- Healthcare (four associates):
- Real Estate (one Of Counsel and two associates):
- Trial & Appellate (one partner and two associates).

"Over the last few months, our roster of attorneys has become deeper and stronger than ever before as we continue to grow our core practice groups at Waller," said John Tishler, chairman of Waller. "It is exciting to see that we are not only attracting attorneys from the best law schools in the Southeast, but also from iconic institutions like Harvard and Stanford. We look forward to their contributions and leadership as we continue to expand our firm here in Nashville and Birmingham.

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May 01, 2013 (GaPundit:http://www.gapundit.com Delivered by Newstex)

GaPundit:

(LEXINGTON, GA) - Attorney and former adjunct law professor, Gary Gerrard announced today that he has officially entered the race to replace Paul Broun in the U.S. House of Representatives representing Georgia's 10th Congressional District.

"For far too long I have sat on the sidelines and watched politicians fail to represent the people who elected them. With a sluggish GDP, faltering job growth, and a Congress that refuses to come to grips with its addiction to overspending, it has become ever apparent Congress is broken," Gerrard said. "I have been a sideline critic for long enough - I believe I can help bring real solutions to Washington and get Georgians and all Americans back to work. That is why I have entered this race - not to climb the political ladder, not to claim any spotlight - but to save the American Dream."

Gerrard, a well-respected and dedicated attorney, has spent his life helping those who have been wronged. A good example includes his pro bono representation of John Goode from Texas in the case GOODE V. CITY OF AUSTIN in the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. Gerrard represented John Goode, an African American man who had lost his concession subcontract with the City of Austin because he refused to submit to the city affirmative action certification process.

Gary served as Chairman of the Oglethorpe County Georgia Development Authority.
He was also the CEO of ACTION Inc., a Community Action Association, serving 8 counties in Congressional District 10 whose mission is to serve the needs of those in poverty and to try to eliminate poverty all together.

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Gary Gerrard is a real conservative and is an attorney and small business owner in Lexington, Georgia. He graduated from the University of Georgia in 1976 magna cum laude as well as from UGA Law School in 1979. Since then, Gary has become a very successful attorney, always looking to help those who deserve it most. Gary served as an adjunct law professor both at the University of Miami and the University of Georgia through 2011. Gary is happily engaged and currently resides in Lexington, Georgia.

http://www.gerrardforcongress.com[1]

Georgia Pundit - Georgia Politics, Campaigns and Elections[2]

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HEADLINE: Waller Expands; Nashville's Largest Law Firm Adds 17 New Attorneys; Law Firm Strengthens Core Practice Groups in Nashville, Birmingham Offices

DATELINE: NASHVILLE, TN; May 01, 2013

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Lin Ye joins Waller as an associate, advising healthcare clients in mergers and acquisitions and joint ventures. Prior to joining Waller, Ye was an associate at Butler Snow/Miller & Martin, LLC, in Nashville, Tenn. Ye earned her J.D. from the University of Tennessee College of Law and her Bachelor of Law and Masters of Law from China University of Political Science and Law.

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SOURCE: Waller

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (PRWEB) April 30, 2013

Dickinson Wright PLLC is pleased to announce that Attorneys Barth X. deRosa and Samuel D. Littlepage have been named 2013 Washington D.C. Super Lawyers.

Dickinson Wright Attorney Nicole M. Meyer has been named a 2013 Washington D.C. Super Lawyer Rising Star.

Barth X. deRosa was named a Washington D.C. Super Lawyer for Intellectual Property for the second year in a row. He focuses his practice in the areas of business technology, copyrights, intellectual property litigation and trademarks. He has successfully prosecuted over 3,000 trademark applications to registration before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, has prosecuted over 400 proceedings before the U.S. Trademark Trial and Appeal Board, and has provided availability reviews and recommendations for over 8,500 trademarks. Mr. deRosa is a member of the District of Columbia Bar Association’s Intellectual Property Sub-Committee, the International Trademark Association and the American Intellectual Property Law Association. He received a B.A. from George Washington University and a J.D. from the University of Georgia School of Law.

Samuel D. Littlepage was named a Washington D.C. Super Lawyer for Intellectual Property. He focuses his practice in the areas of intellectual property, trademark/copyright litigation, technology licensing & transfers, and trademarks. He has represented clients in numerous federal court cases involving copyright, unfair competition, dilution, right of publicity, and trade dress (product configuration) infringement and false advertising cases. He is a member of the American Intellectual Property Law Association, the International Trademark Association, the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, the Virginia State Bar Association, and the U.S. Copyright Society. He received a B.A. and M.A. from West Virginia University and a J.D. from the George Mason School of Law.

Nicole M. Meyer was named a Washington D.C. Super Lawyer Rising Star for Intellectual Property. She focuses her practice in the areas of intellectual property, trademarks, copyrights, and intellectual property litigation. She has represented clients in numerous federal courts involving counterfeiting, trademark, unfair competition and copyright infringement claims. She also manages the worldwide trademark portfolios of numerous U.S. and foreign companies in various industries, including the apparel, automotive, travel and hospitality industries. She is a member of the State Bar of Virginia, the State Bar of the District of Columbia, the International Trademark Association (Anti-Counterfeiting...
Committee), and the Intellectual Property Owners Association. She received a B.A. from Amherst College and a J.D. from American University.

Super Lawyers is a listing of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. Rising Stars are the top up-and-coming attorneys in the region -- those who are 40 years old or younger, or who have been practicing law for 10 years or less.

About Dickinson Wright PLLC

Dickinson Wright PLLC is a full-service law firm with more than 40 practice areas. Founded in 1878, Dickinson Wright PLLC has over 350 lawyers in offices located in Detroit, Troy, Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor, Lansing, and Saginaw, Mich.; Columbus, Ohio; Las Vegas, Nev.; Nashville, Tenn.; Phoenix, Ariz. (operating as Dickinson Wright/Mariscal Weeks); and Washington, D.C. Dickinson Wright LLP has over 30 lawyers in Toronto, Canada.

Read the full story at http://www.prweb.com/releases/2013/DWWashingtonDCSuperLawyer/prweb10680553.htm

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Kathleen Baydala Joyner
Daily Report
05-02-2013

Georgia's Class of 2012 law school graduates were slightly more fortunate than their predecessors, with three in five securing full-time jobs lasting a year or more and requiring bar passage, according to the American Bar Association.

The 65.5 percent rate is up compared with the state's Class of 2011, among whom 61.1 percent found placement in the same category.

Last year's Peach State law grads also fared better than the national average. The ABA's employment summaries, which measured the Class of 2012's employment status as of Feb. 15, 2013, showed that 56.2 percent of the country's 46,404 graduates found long-term jobs requiring bar passage.

While the employment numbers may seem to point to an economy that's bouncing back, the percentage of unemployed Georgia graduates also rose from 9.3 percent among 2011 grads to 11.5 percent among 2012 grads. More of the unemployed also reported they were not looking for jobs. The increase in unemployment likely is explained by a dip in jobs with a timeframe of less than a year. Essentially, more graduates found longer term jobs, whether on a full-time or part-time basis, or didn't find any jobs at all.

David O'Brien, director of Legal Career Services at the University of Georgia, said he's noticed that big firms, which typically hired large numbers of graduates years ago, now are shying away from the typical partnership track jobs. Instead, they are hiring contract attorneys to work in discovery centers or write briefs, but not handle entire cases.

"It's a lower-cost model," O'Brien said.

That leaves more graduates looking toward mid-sized and small firms or jobs in the government sector.

"When I went law school, I thought I'd get the job that comes off the OCI [On Campus Interviews] conveyor belt because that was the path laid before me," O'Brien said. "Jobs are harder to come by, so students are forced to think more clearly about what they want to do."

The largest individual school increase in students with full-time, long-term jobs requiring bar passage belonged to Mercer University School of Law, which rose to second in the state and came within a tenth of a percent of tying the usual No. 1 placeholder, Emory University.

Mercer's Assistant Dean of Career Services Stephanie Powell attributed the boost from 63.1 percent to 73.2 percent to an expansion of the school's careers services staff.

"When our new dean came on board in 2010, one of his priorities was expanding the Career Services Office," Powell said. "So, we have grown from a professional staff of two to four."

More staffers meant students get more attention and direction while hunting for jobs. "It also gave us a way to reach

out to employers rather than waiting on them to come to us,” Powell added.

Emory's figure climbed from 68.9 percent to 73.3 percent. Lydia Russo, assistant dean for professional development and career strategy, credited the law school's 23 practice societies with helping students find which law jobs suited them best before graduating.

"We call it window shopping," Russo said. "Each society has a faculty adviser, at least one alumni adviser who is practicing in that area and one staff member who is a career adviser.

Emory also reported the largest number of graduates finding jobs at firms, with 500 or more employees, and the largest number of graduates securing clerkships with federal, state or local courts. However, 37 of its graduates landed in law-school- or university-funded positions—more than any other school. (University of Georgia reported four, Mercer two and Georgia State University none.)

Russo said the university's Bridge to Practice program, which other prestigious schools such as Duke University School of Law also offer, awards fellowships to graduates who have taken their bar exams but have not found jobs right away.

"It gives them their first foot in the door and make a wonderful impression. We've seen many fellowships turn into permanent jobs," she said.

"It helps fill gaps on résumés, and it's easier to find a job when you have a job," she added.

UGA saw its full-time, long-term employment figure increase from 61.2 percent to 68.6 percent, and Georgia State University's rose from 64.5 percent to 65.8 percent.

Vickie Brown, Georgia State's director of Law Career Services, attributed the increase to a program the law school implemented a few years ago when it saw the recession coming. The Short-Term Assistance Research Program, known as SHARP, places third-year students and recent graduates with solo practitioners and small firms for research projects that can range from one day to several months.

"We found the program to be an introduction for students, and some jobs turned into permanent offers," Brown said. "And some of these employers who may not have had a SHARP project at the time we reached out to them—we're seeing those employers in our job posting pool later on." Atlanta's John Marshall saw a slight increase from 2011, but was still below the national average. Its graduates in that category rose from 40.9 percent to 43.5 percent.

Ivonne Betancourt, John Marshall's assistant dean for career development, said more credence should be paid to graduates who find jobs that do not require bar passage.

"We have many students who are working for a company in a professional position and are coming to law school for promotional purposes," Betancourt said. "They don't want to be an attorney, but they need an advanced degree to move ahead."

Each school except Mercer reported class of 2012 graduates who opened solo practices, the highest numbers coming from Georgia State and John Marshall, with eight and 13, respectively.

The solo practice figure has sparked some controversy as ranking institutions, such as Law School Transparency, have deemed solo practices to be unsustainable employment for rookie lawyers.

That assumption is not fair, Betancourt said, because her school attracts many students who may be new to law but not to the business world.

"Not everybody wants to go to a firm and bill hours. We get a lot of second- or third-career students," she said. "They've been there and done that; they've already put in hours of hard work and they want something different."
The Met Will Return a Pair of Statues to Cambodia

By TOM MASHBERG and RALPH BLUMENTHAL

Six weeks ago the Metropolitan Museum of Art sent two of its top executives to Cambodia to resolve a thorny dispute: whether two pieces of ancient Khmer art that the museum has long prominently exhibited were the product of looting.

In days they had their answer. Cambodian officials documented that the two 10th-century Khmer statues, donated to the Met in four pieces as separate gifts between 1987 and 1992, had indeed been smuggled out of a remote jungle temple around the time of the country's civil war in the 1970s.

On Friday the museum said it would repatriate the life-size sandstone masterworks, known as the Kneeling Attendants, which have guarded the doorway to the Met's Southeast Asian galleries since they opened in 1994.

The decision came after months of behind-the-scenes contact between the Met and Cambodian officials. Thomas P. Campbell, the museum's director, said the decision — one of the more significant in a recent spate of controversial repatriations by American museums — came after the Cambodians offered evidence that the works had been improperly removed from the Koh Ker temple complex, 180 miles northwest of Phnom Penh.

Among the evidence the officials considered were photographs of the statue's broken-off bases, which were left behind at the site, and witness statements that the Cambodians have collected suggesting that the statues were intact as recently as 1970.

"This is a case in which additional information regarding the Kneeling Attendants has led the museum to consider facts that were not known at the time of the acquisition and to take the action we are announcing today," Mr. Campbell said in a statement.

No timetable has been set. The museum told Cambodian officials in a letter last month that it hoped to send the objects as soon as "appropriate arrangements for transit can be mutually established."

The Met's decision reflects the growing sensitivity by American museums to claims by...
foreign countries for the return of their cultural artifacts. Many items that have long been displayed in museums do not have precise paperwork showing how the pieces left their countries of origin. In recent years, at the urging of the Association of Art Museum Directors and scholars, many museums have applied more rigorous standards to their acquisitions.

At the time the statues came to the Met in four pieces — two torsos and two heads — the Met and the museum world allowed acquisitions without detailed histories, although an effort was supposed to be made to examine an object's origin in case it was illicit.

In an interview from Cambodia, Chan Tani, the secretary of state with the nation’s Office of the Council of Ministers, expressed excitement about the return.

"This shows the high ethical standards and professional practices of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which they are known for," he said.

Cambodian officials also visited the Met in March to photograph its Khmer items. A government official said that Cambodia would like the museum to review the provenance of another two dozen objects.

The Met has developed a collaborative relationship with the country and is now exhibiting 10 sculptural works by the contemporary Cambodian artist Sopheap Pich. The museum is also hoping to hold a major exhibition of Khmer artifacts next year.

The negotiations over the statues, which began last June, culminated with the trip by Sharon Cott, the Met's general counsel, and John Guy, its Southeast Asian curator, to Cambodia in March.

"As a matter of courtesy, they wanted to go there rather than communicate by e-mail," said Harold Holzer, the Met's senior vice president for external affairs.

Among the evidence cited by the Cambodians was the finding of the statues' broken-off bases still at the temple. That discovery is significant, according to Cambodian officials, who say archaeologists have evidence showing that other statues from the same grouping as the twins remained in place as late as 1970, only to disappear by 1975.

Another object that was once part of the same grouping is a huge 10th-century statue of a warrior, known as Duryodhana, which Sotheby's had hoped to sell in 2011 for $3 million on behalf of its Belgian owner.

Cambodia says that statue was also looted. United States officials have filed suit in federal court in Manhattan to confiscate the statue on Cambodia's behalf. The trial is expected to
start later this year.

Sotheby’s has said it applied all appropriate standards of provenance research before agreeing to sell the statue. Asked on Friday what impact the Met’s decision might have on the court case, Sotheby’s replied in a statement that: “The Met’s voluntary agreement does not shed any light on the key issues in our case.” The auction house says that the consignor bought the statue in good faith in 1975 and that it had no knowledge of Cambodia’s claim of ownership.

A fourth statue in the grouping, called Bhima, is at the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena, Calif. Cambodia has also asked the United States government to help it recover the Bhima from the Norton Simon. The museum says it is cooperating with investigators.

The Kneeling Attendants came to the Met in a series of gifts that began in 1987 when Spink & Son, a London auction house, and a longtime Khmer art collector, Douglas A. J. Latchford, joined in donating one of the two heads. A second head was donated by Raymond G. and Milla Louise Handley in 1989, who had bought it two years earlier, also at Spink.

In 1992, Mr. Latchford gave the museum the two torsos, and in 1993 the heads and bodies were reattached by museum conservators.

At one time Mr. Latchford was also listed as an owner of the Sotheby’s statue, which was later sold by Spink to the husband, now dead, of its current owner.

Mr. Latchford, 81, has said that the paperwork was mistaken — that the auction house listed him as an owner for accounting purposes and that he never actually purchased the warrior statue. He has denied having any role in the illicit shipments of Cambodian antiquities.

In an interview from Bangkok, where he lives, Mr. Latchford said of the Met’s statues: “Admittedly these things were moonlighted out of Cambodia and wound up somewhere else. But had they not been, they would likely have been shot up for target practice by the Khmer Rouge.”

He said that collectors and museums had been essential in rescuing and caring for cultural artifacts that spread an understanding of Khmer culture.

Mr. Latchford has donated at least seven other items to the Met, including the stone head of a Buddha and the bronze head of a Shiva, both from the 10th-century Khmer Angkor period, according to the museum’s Web site.
Mr. Holzer said there was no special effort under way to re-examine the provenance of those items.

Over the years the Met has returned many objects of questionable provenance to other countries. In 2010 it sent Egypt 19 pieces from King Tutankhamun’s tomb that had been in its collection since the early 1900s. In 2006 the Met signed an agreement with Italy to return the famous Euphronios krater, a Hellenistic silver collection and four other antiquities in exchange for loans of some of the items and other pieces.

In 1997 the Met returned a 10th-century head of Shiva to Cambodia after it turned up on a list of looted objects from Angkor.

Tess Davis, a researcher on Cambodian antiquities with the Scottish Center for Crime and Justice Research in Glasgow, said that the Met’s gesture should serve as a signal to other American museums that possess antiquities with sketchy provenances.

“The Met could have treated Cambodia’s request as an obstacle,” she said. “Instead, the museum recognized it as an opportunity to set the moral standard for the art world.”
DeKalb school system sued over 'debt' to lawyers

BY TY TAGAMI - THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

Two DeKalb County residents are alleging in court that their local school district has incurred illegal debt for lawyer fees.

The lawsuit, filed Friday against the DeKalb Schools by former Georgia Attorney General Michael Bowers, could derail an older lawsuit in which the district is seeking $100 million from Heery International Inc., the company that used to manage DeKalb's school construction.

The new lawsuit in DeKalb Superior Court attacks the contract that binds DeKalb to its lawyers in the Heery suit, Atlanta-based King & Spalding. It alleges that the district entered into an unconstitutional agreement that commits the district to paying millions of dollars to the attorneys.

One of the plaintiffs, Donald M. Green, is a Heery vice president named as a defendant in the older lawsuit, which alleges fraudulent billing and mismanagement by Heery. The company acknowledged through a spokesman that it is helping to pay for the new lawsuit. The second plaintiff is Marsha M. Harding, who works in the construction industry but told the AJC she has no business ties to Heery and that she has a child in the school district.

The new lawsuit plays on mounting public frustration over legal costs in a district that is facing another budget shortfall this year.

DeKalb had paid around $6.5 million in attorney fees to King & Spalding by 2008, when the firm agreed to start billing on a
On May 18, Judge Beverly B. Martin of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit will serve as the keynote speaker at the University of Georgia School of Law's graduation.

Approximately 230 law students will receive their juris doctor, while six master of laws candidates will be recognized for completing one year of graduate legal study.

The processional will begin at 10 a.m. on the quadrangle in front of the law school on UGA's North Campus. In the event of rain, the ceremony will be moved to Stegeman Coliseum.

A 1981 Georgia Law alumna, Martin was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 2010 to her current seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals. Previously, she served for nearly a decade as a U.S. District Court judge for the Northern District of Georgia. Martin worked as a U.S. attorney and assistant U.S. attorney in the Middle District of Georgia from 1994 to 2000 and represented the state of Georgia as an assistant attorney general in various litigation matters from 1984 to 1994. She also practiced at the firm Martin and Snow in Macon after graduating from law school.

Martin earned her bachelor's degree from Stetson University in 1976 before coming to Athens to pursue her law degree at UGA.
DeKalb school system sued over ‘debt’ to lawyers


"contingency" basis, meaning its pay would come from any judgment or settlement. The lawyers had logged $19 million in unpaid fees by last summer. The contract also compels DeKalb to pay those fees directly if the district settles the case against the law firm’s will.

That clause has stymied some school board members who are tired of paying and want the case to go away. Melvin Johnson, the school board chairman, didn’t seem upset about the new lawsuit, even though he is named as a defendant.

Though DeKalb is no longer paying for the lawyers’ time, the contract compels the district to continue paying the firm’s expenses. The AJC reported last summer that DeKalb had spent more than $19 million on the case, mostly for expenses. During the final six months of last year, DeKalb paid King & Spalding another $1.4 million, according to district records.

“We want to eliminate the legal fees to the degree possible,” Johnson said. He said the board wants “some closure” in the Heery case, and has told Superintendent Michael Thurmond to reduce the district’s overall legal bill. “The amount of money that we’re spending on legal fees should be directed toward student learning,” Johnson said.

Jeff Dickerson, a district spokesman, said he discussed the new lawsuit with Thurmond. Dickerson implied DeKalb would not work hard to protect the contract with its lawyers: “The school board and administration would not look kindly on authorizing any new spending on any new legal cases, including this one,” Dickerson said.

King & Spalding had no comment.

Bowers said his new lawsuit hangs on the definition of "debt." He and his clients contend the contingency agreement to pay legal fees amounts to taking on public debt that can only be authorized by voters.

Legal experts say the case has merit.

Ronald Carlson, a law professor at the University of Georgia, read the Bowers lawsuit at the request of the AJC, and said it is a “significant attack on the contract.”

After DeKalb fired Heery, the company sued in 2007 seeking half a million dollars in unpaid bills. The district countersued for $17 million, alleging fraudulent billing and mismanagement, and later raised its demand to around six times that amount. No trial is scheduled, and the legal costs continue to mount, making any settlement harder to negotiate.

Chuck Clay, a lawyer and former state senator from Cobb County, has followed the Heery case. He said the legal fees and expenses “far outweigh” what’s at stake and will make it politically difficult for a judge to immediately dismiss the new suit challenging the contract. Mounting public concern about the costs in the Heery case creates “enormous pressure to allow the proceedings to move forward,” he said.

Officials such as the newly hired DeKalb superintendent have felt that pressure. This week, Thurmond released his “90-day” plan. Among the stated goals: “eliminate excessive legal fees.”

Kirk Lunde is among the DeKalb parents who have been pushing Thurmond to curb legal costs.

“I think he is responding to public pressure on something that is outrageous,” Lunde said.

Coming Sunday
The DeKalb County School District spends far more on lawyers than other big Atlanta districts.
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Athens Peer Court receives 2013 Liberty Bell Award

Athens Peer Court

Taking part in the Athens Peer Court were (front left) Tony Parson (ACe Juvenile Court), Michael Reid, and Cardine WcGlamry (UGA Street Law) (back row from left) Malory Parson (ACC Juvenile Court), Michael Amerinian; Rob Huestis (president, Western Circuit Bar Association) and Caroline McNelly (UGA Street Law).

"The four students are all trained APC volunteers and 11th graders at Cedar Shoals High School.

Athens Peer Court fits so well both with the Liberty Bell criteria and with recent changes to juvenile justice in Georgia," said Robert Huestis, president of the Western Circuit Bar Association. "The new juvenile code focuses on enabling juvenile offenders to get help through community-based, diversionary programs, rather than face jail time."

Each year the Liberty Bell Award is given by local bar associations to recognize outstanding community service by a citizen or organization that promotes a better understanding of the rule of law, encourages a greater respect for law and the courts, stimulates a sense of civic responsibility and contributes to good government in the community.

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On May 7, the Western Circuit Bar Association presented the 2013 Liberty Bell Award to the Athens Peer Court — an innovation in juvenile justice developed by University of Georgia outreach and local juvenile justice units.

Athens Peer Court provides a way for first time youth offenders to accept responsibility and repair the harm caused by their crime and connects them to the community. In addition, area high school and middle school students gain leadership and career skills as they are trained to serve as advocates, judges, bailiffs, and jurors.

"Each week our youth volunteers represent their community to ensure that their peers are held accountable, have a chance to be heard, and ... don't get in trouble again," said Emily Boness, director of APC and a faculty member at UGA's Fanning Institute for Leadership Development. "I am constantly impressed by them. One minute they're talking about prom and the next they are representing the youth or the community just as diligently as adults."

As of January, more than 40 students from three Athens-area high schools and one middle school had completed the APC training and had heard more than 80 cases.

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Parker, Hudson, Rainer & Dobbs LLP is pleased to announce the addition of Steven M. Goldman as a partner in the firm’s Atlanta office. Goldman joins Parker Hudson after 20 years as senior-level in-house counsel for three of the nation’s largest hotel systems. His arrival bolsters the firm’s transactional capabilities in franchise, distribution and hospitality, and provides clients with a full-range of legal services related to developing, operating and growing franchise and hospitality systems both domestically and globally.

"Steve has first-hand experience managing the evolving challenges and regulatory issues that arise on a daily basis in a multi-national corporation’s legal department," explained G. Wayne Hillis, Jr., managing partner of Parker Hudson. "He helps our clients draw a connection between their companies' strategic plans and actionable legal solutions, and he appreciates the demand for predictability in budgeting that in-house lawyers require."

Goldman is a commercial lawyer with extensive experience in lodging, franchise, distribution, licensing, and bankruptcy and receivership matters. For most of his in-house career he was responsible for all matters related to developing and operating international franchise lodging systems. He was most recently based in Washington, D.C. as executive vice president, assistant general counsel and a corporate officer of Marriott International. In this capacity, he oversaw the growth of the company's franchised hotels and global system of over a dozen core brands. Before joining Marriott, Goldman played much the same role as division general counsel for Sheraton and was senior litigation counsel for Holiday Inns.

"Many franchise attorneys help their clients only in the early phases of formation, but Steve's background in solving ongoing, operational challenges, including those related to international expansion, adds depth to our practice and allows us to provide transactional support to clients at all stages of business, from start-up to maturity," adds Hillis. "These capabilities complement our firm's existing strengths in franchise and distribution litigation."

Throughout his career, Goldman has been involved in leadership roles with a number of legal and trade organizations, including the American Bar Association, the Atlanta Bar Association, the International Franchise Association, the National Franchise Council and the North American Securities Administrators Association.
Goldman earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Vermont and his law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law.

Parker, Hudson, Rainer & Dobbs LLP is a mid-sized law firm with an integrated collection of exceptional boutique practices in bankruptcy; commercial finance; corporate and mergers and acquisitions; employee benefits/ERISA; employment and civil rights litigation and counseling; franchise, distribution and global licensing; health care; litigation; real estate; and tax. With more than 70 attorneys and two offices in Atlanta and Tallahassee, Fla., the firm offers clients superior legal talent with excellent service, lower overhead and efficient billing rates. For more information, visit the firm's website at http://www.phrd.com.

SOURCE Parker, Hudson, Rainer & Dobbs LLP

CONTACT: Lori Pilon, Parker, Hudson, Rainer & Dobbs LLP, (404) 420-4328, lpilon@phrd.com

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Waycross Journal-Herald (Georgia)

May 8, 2013 Wednesday

SECTION: OBITUARIES; Pg. 3

LENGTH: 470 words

HEADLINE: Judge T.A. Parker Sr.

BODY:

Judge Thomas Augustus Parker Sr., 87, died Monday morning (May 6, 2013) at Baptist Village Retirement Communities following an extended illness.

He was a native and lifelong resident of Waycross, son of the late William Cling Parker and Jessie Carswell Parker.
A Strong Response to Paying Board Nominees

By STEVEN M. DAVIDOFF

The stakes just got higher for shareholder activists.

Responding to hedge funds' efforts to give incentives to nominees to company boards, the law firm Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz in essence came over the top on Thursday in a memo distributed to clients. Signed by the leading deal lawyer Martin Lipton and seven other Wachtell partners, the memo proposes that company boards consider adopting a bylaw prohibiting shareholder activists from compensating director nominees. Excluded from this prohibition are out-of-pocket expenses and payments for indemnification.

Wachtell's proposal takes square aim at a topic I recently wrote about: the payment by hedge funds of large amounts of incentive compensation to director nominees. The issue has come to light because of two recent activist situations. Paul Singer's Elliott Management has nominated five directors to the 14-member board of Hess while Barry Rosenstein's Jana Partners recently lost a contest to elect five directors to Agrium's 12-member board. In both cases, the hedge funds' director nominees were provided with incentive compensation linked to the performance of the companies' shares that had the potential to pay them millions of dollars.

Since then a mini-debate has broken out online among law professors over whether these payments are legal or appropriate. Wachtell, which has done battle before with academics over their views in support of shareholders, is now citing two academics who are on its side.

The first is John C. Coffee Jr., the Columbia Law School professor, who stated that these "third-party bonuses create the wrong incentives, fragment the board and imply a shift toward both the short-term and higher risk."

Meanwhile, Professor Stephen Bainbridge of the UCLA School of Law has written extensively on this subject and summed up his feelings by stating that "if this nonsense is not illegal, it ought to be."

On the other side, several equally well-respected academics have signed off on these arrangements, even allowing themselves to be quoted in Elliot's materials. In this corner we have Professor Randall Thomas of Vanderbilt Law School who said this approach made sense because it "lends itself to allowing these nominees, if elected, to focus on independent decision-making and fulfilling their fiduciary obligations on behalf of shareholders."

Another professor quoted in the materials is Larry Cunningham of George Washington
University Law School who later argued that all of this “is intended to align the interests of those directors with those of the company’s shareholders.”

As you might suspect with all of this debate, many issues are being raised about whether these directors can be deemed independent, whether they have different incentives and whether this whole arrangement is even appropriate. Another law professor, Usha Rodrigues of the University of Georgia Law School, offers her own views on this while summarizing the state of play.

But as before and without wading into this feeding frenzy, I am a bit wary of these arrangements. I can see the need that hedge funds have to find director nominees and to attract the most qualified they need to be compensated. This compensation is all disclosed, so shareholders and other directors can monitor the situation and refuse to re-elect directors if the payment turns out to be inappropriate.

But I also have a “here we go again” view. Are we now going to do for director compensation what we did for chief executive compensation and spiral it all higher? The assumption that aligning incentives must be a good thing brings to mind that line from Whitney Houston that “the children are the future.” Of course they are the future, but it doesn’t really mean anything more than that. (Full disclosure: I am not only an academic, I have on occasion listened to Whitney Houston.) Another way to look at this is to examine what happened at Apple. Does anyone think that Apple would not have performed as well if it had paid Al Gore a couple of million dollars to be a director instead of tens of millions of dollars?

Still, though I am wary about incentive compensation for directors coming directly from hedge funds, I think that the issue is worth discussing and examining. And let’s be clear, in the case of Hess I believe the real issue is the company’s extremely poor relative performance over the years and which slate of directors is best situated to take the company forward.

But while making good points about the flaws of this compensation, Mr. Lipton and the lawyers at Wachtell aim to shut down the entire practice. This includes not only the potentially multimillion-dollar payments that Elliot and Jana agreed to, but the common practice of “tipping” hedge fund director nominees anywhere from $15,000 to $150,000 for just agreeing to be nominated. In fact, this type of tipping is really the more common practice than the most recent incentive compensation.

If Wachtell’s bylaw is adopted widely, and I suspect it will see some momentum, directors will have to agree to be nominated out of the goodness of their hearts. In other words, the bylaw not only strikes at the incentive compensation that is being debated but the more common “tipping” arrangements that are not.

In fairness, Wachtell states in the memo that this bylaw will not stop directors from receiving compensation if they are elected or the hedge fund from paying them if they are not. But if you read the proposed bylaw, it is so broadly worded that any arrangements to
Brittney Denise Diggs of Savannah, Georgia, and Geoffrey Alan Alls of Savannah, Georgia, were married on Saturday, December 29, 2012, at the Jepson Center for the Arts in Savannah.

The Bride was given in marriage by her mother, Gail Bush Diggs, and father, D. Lester Diggs. Bro. Johnny Kinsey of Augusta, Georgia, officiated.

The Bride is a daughter of Gail Bush Diggs of Aiken and D. Lester Diggs, of Hilton Head, South Carolina. She is the granddaughter of the late Menthalee Bush and the late Susie R. Bush. Paternal grandparents are the late George Diggs and the late Clara Diggs.

The Groom is the son of Andrea White Alls and the late Howard Alls, of Savannah, Georgia. Maternal grandparents are the late George and the late Alberta White of Savannah. Paternal grandparents are the late Eugene and the late Alberta Alls.

Natalie Simone Diggs of Columbia, SC, sister of the bride, and Elise Alls of Atlanta, sister of the groom, served as maids of honor. Bridesmaids were Sylvia Alls of Savannah, sister of the
bride, Trelles Mealer of Aiken, cousin of the bride, Tia Smith, Esq., of Atlanta, Ga., Candace Duvernay, Esq., of Atlanta, Ga., Elizabeth Goueti, Esq., of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Nydia Pouyes, Esq., of Washington, DC, all friends of the Bride.

James Riley of Atlanta, Ga., served as Best Man. Groomsmen were Willie Alls of Savannah, Ga., cousin of the Groom, Almuhtada Smith, Esq., of Los Angeles, CA, William Sharp of New York, NY, Allen Parks, Sr. of Atlanta, Ga., and Ricardo Glover of Raleigh, NC, all friends of the Groom.

Makana Edwards, cousin of the bride, was the flower girl, and Aleric Edwards of Aiken was the Ringbearer.

The Bride is a 2002 graduate of Aiken High School. She received her B. A. in International Affairs/Political Science in 2005 from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Fla., and her Juris Doctor from The University of Georgia School of Law in Athens, Ga, in 2009. She is the Ombudsmen for Savannah State University, and teaches at both SSU and the University of Phoenix Savannah Campus.

She is also employed by Chatham County Juvenile Court.

The Bridegroom is a 2001 graduate of Beach High School in Savannah, Ga., received his B. A. in Political Science from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga., and his Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law in 2009.

He is a member of the Law Firm of Charles Bell & Associates in Savannah, Georgia.

The couple will reside in Savannah, Georgia.
The music cranked as party-goers boogied, drank, got high and caroused, loudly carrying on like they did most nights at Perry Homes.

The combustible mix gave folks in the sprawling public housing project many reasons to be on edge. A wrong word, slight or misperceived glance might be all it took to set something off.

One night, the normal din turned darker than usual. Someone ended an argument with a knife. A man held his guts as blood sputtered through his fingers.

Six-year-old Robbie Singleton, a veteran of such gatherings, was mesmerized. He didn’t cry. He didn’t run away. He inched closer and absorbed the frantic atmosphere that had become routine. Even so, the boy knew it wasn’t right. He didn’t belong there, not where adults acted like fools and parties ended in bloodshed.

Robbie’s well being was not a priority for his mom, Cat. She told Robbie not to call her "mama," especially in public. She thought it cramped her style, made her seem old.

And she did little to lift him up. Most days she seemed bent on tearing him down.

"You’ll never be nothing, you block-headed little joker," she’d tell her son. "Nothing!"
Surviving Perry Homes

His mother was wrong. Today, he is somebody. Robbie has forged himself into Robert "IronE" Singleton, a muscular, gregarious and charismatic movie and TV actor with a recent run of good parts, a picturesque family and a career at a crossroads.

Singleton, now 38, recently spent three seasons as "T-Dog," one of the few black regulars on the hit AMC zombie apocalypse series "The Walking Dead." The likable but somewhat mysterious T-Dog was introduced to viewers getting beaten into semi-consciousness by a meth-fueled redneck and ultimately was eaten by zombies while he was protecting a friend.

Before that role, Singleton dipped into his reservoir of life in the projects to play a menacing ghetto hoodlum in the wildly popular movie "The Blind Side," filmed in Atlanta. In that, Singleton went jaw-to-jaw with actress Sandra Bullock, who won an Academy Award for her role. During the awards show, producers played the scene they shared to demonstrate her dramatic chops --- and, by reflection, his, too.

Recently, on a gray, blustery day, Singleton and his wife, Commaleta, traversed the northwest Atlanta acreage where Perry Homes once stood. Built in 1959, the sprawling complex of two-story brick buildings that once housed nearly 1,000 families was plopped between a railroad yard and a garbage dump. Former residents say the location spoke loudly about how society viewed them.

Perry Homes was torn down in the late 1990s and a large part of its footprint is now rolling hills covered with scrub pine and shrubs. "The gym was over there," said the former athlete, pointing to a hollow. "There was a pool hall over there. And a liquor store. Nothing good came from there."

Singleton and his wife, who met at the now-closed Samuel Howard Archer High School, walked down the hill toward 2163 Clarissa Drive, the three-bedroom unit where the Singletons, sometimes 11 of them, lived.

"Wow," he said, shaking his head. "It's all cleared out, all a memory now."
He recalled the hangouts where kids gathered after school to kill time, where they played ball or fought. There's the cut-through path. There's the stand of plum trees, an oasis in an otherwise forbidding place. He recalled the anger and negativity that hung like a fog, about how outsiders viewed Perry Homes and how residents saw the outside world.

"Sometimes buses refused to come through here because they'd get rocked," he said. "I have friends who say, 'Man, those were the days' and I'm like 'What?!' It was a nightmare. We just made the best of a bad situation."

Then a small deer loped across the green-scape.

"Whoa," Singleton said, turning to his wife, laughing. "This is not Perry Homes any more."

Headed down a dark road

Singleton came to Perry Homes as a young boy when his mother moved him and his older brother, Tracy, in with her mother, Ethelrine Singleton, the matriarch of the family. Ethelrine, who Singleton called Momzie, increasingly became the boys' de facto mom as Cat slipped away to drugs, men and the streets.
As a young woman, Cat got hooked up with cocaine and would disappear for days, returning home a haggard, volatile mess.

"She’d get violent; everyone was scared of her," said Larry Singleton, her older brother, Singleton’s uncle. "She’d get a knife (and threaten family members). I’d say ‘Go ahead, cut me, because if you do, you’ll be dead.’ I’d tell her, ‘Leave those kids alone. Go back on the streets.’"

The pressure of life built on Singleton, who, as a young teen, would come home from school, close himself up in the bathroom and scream at the top of his lungs.

"Aaahhhhh!!!"

"That’s crazy Robert up there screaming again," Larry remembers passersby saying. But Larry defended his nephew. "He’s not crazy, he just has to get it out of his system. He don’t belong here."

The Perry Homes of Singleton’s early teens — the late 1980s — was a scary place. Crack was rampant. News reports from the time document frequent shootings, knifings, drug sales and car theft rings. A terrified young mother at the time went to court to demand the housing authority move her from the project after a man toting a sub-machine gun invaded her apartment.

Uncle Larry lived off and on with the family and provided the adult male influence missing in the lives of many of the young boys who lived there. It was a mixed blessing. Larry — and, in fact, several in the Singleton clan — did not shy away from the underbelly of urban life.

"Uncle Larry was gangster," Singleton recalled. "He taught me how to survive."

Larry had been a drug dealer, a coke addict and a pimp. The Singletons were a tough bunch. "Momzie" tells a tale of Atlanta policeman Sidney Dorsey (now in prison for ordering the murder of DeKalb County sheriff-elect Derwin Brown) walking into the Singleton home to arrest a family member after a loud argument.

"No you’re not," said an aunt, who punched the surprised cop. Several others, including an elderly woman with a handbag, beat the officer silly and took his gun before he escaped.

It was no surprise that 14-year-old Singleton started peddling small amounts of crack and carried a beat-up .38-caliber he bought for $40. Singleton was tired of wearing hand-me-downs and reaching into empty pockets. Crack was a volume game. "If I sold 10 rocks, I’d get $30," he recalled. Crackheads knocked on his back door and he’d hand out the goods. Just about everyone at Perry Homes knew life was a hustle. And now he was part of it.

Meeting a mentor

Lucky for Singleton, he learned to keep a low profile and was never arrested. His stocky frame and family’s reputation kept bullies from messing with him. But even those who mind their business get caught up in Perry Homes, so Singleton developed a sixth sense to avoid fights. "I was mindful not to agitate people," he said. "I knew what to say, or not say."

The thickly muscled teen grew into a hard-nosed middle-linebacker at Archer High School and was a teachers’ favorite. He performed well in the school oratorical contest and then at another before the Atlanta school board. His poem was an English Victorian poem called "Invictus," Latin for "Unconquered."

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

"I made it cool to be smart," he said, laughing. "I guess I was different from my peers."

Although he was dealing drugs, Singleton's heart wasn't into it. He had dreams to get out and knew peddling crack wasn't the way. Uncle Larry, who still had a foot in the game, was disturbed to find out his nephew, the family "bookworm," was dabling on his turf. His career as a drug dealer came to an abrupt end when another uncle stole Singleton's stash.

Within his community, Singleton was respected and respectful, but when he ventured out of Perry Homes, he felt self-conscious of the way he came across to others.

"You feel so naked when you leave the area," he said. "You stand out."

His first taste of feeling like an outsider came when he was 16 and worked at a Subway restaurant near Georgia Tech. He largely kept his mouth shut and watched the clientele that included Tech students, professors and business people. The experience was a turning point in his life.

"My exposure to this group broadened my horizons," he recalled. "There were a lot of white people who came into Subway. They were articulate, they talked about business, about college, about stuff that mattered. All that stood out to me. I noticed they were not quick to yell or scream or argue.

"People would ask, 'What are you doing after high school?' They had expectations. High school was just a start."

Greg Rosenblatt, the young manager of the sandwich shop, saw in Singleton a teen with a good personality, smarts and just enough initiative not to get fired. Rosenblatt realized he needed to get Singleton and his other young employees to buy into the idea of the job --- "to help them want to help me."

He straddled the line between being a friend and a pushy boss, chewing out Singleton when he called in sick with lame excuses. The barrel-chested Singleton laughed off the chidings and came out of his shell. He showed up, took pride in his work and engaged with customers.

Singleton started carrying a well-thumbed dictionary, absorbing its contents between making sandwiches or while waiting for the bus. He felt he had to catch up. People at work used words he didn't know, so he tried to learn a page a day.

Rosenblatt attended Singleton's high school graduation in 1993. It was a time to mark achievement but also a time of sadness. A month earlier, Singleton's mother, Cat, died from complications of HIV, a victim of the streets.

Singleton received scholarship money and was headed to Kentucky State University, a great step toward breaking away from Perry Homes.

Rosenblatt kept a slot open for Singleton at the sandwich shop when he came home summers from college. Singleton later managed a Subway. "I knew I could trust him," said Rosenblatt. "He had everyone trained, and I never had to worry if the store was open or not."

Singleton considers Rosenblatt a mentor. The businessman shrugs in response.
"I'm just happy to have been the right person at the right place at the right time," he said.

New name, new direction

As Singleton headed to Kentucky State University, he got a lecture from his grandmother, who had seen life destroy some of her own children. "Opportunities don't knock but once," she told him. "Grab it."

It was a heady time of freedom and self-exploration in Kentucky. He played football, made a wide assortment of friends and dug in to improve his grades.

A year later, he transferred to the University of Georgia, where he earned a slot on the football team's practice squad. He also dove into the theater program, finding it to be a great outlet for his high energy and desire to redefine himself.

The idea of acting had been brewing for a while. In high school, he had discovered public speaking and the art of working a crowd. Later, he competed at hip-hop dance-offs at other high schools and around town. Getting a crowd cheering was an adrenaline pump not unlike football. The idea of being paid to be someone else almost seemed to be too good to be true.

At UGA, he beefed up to 200 pounds to become a human battering ram as a practice-squad running back, facing the first-string defense each week as the team geared up for opponents. His hard-nosed play earned him the nickname "Hustle Man," although it didn't translate into playing time in games.

After three years on the UGA practice squad, and suiting up for many games, number 23 stood on the sidelines in the 1998 Outback Bowl for his last football game. He had not played a single down for the Bulldogs and the senior running back was resigned to finishing his career as cannon fodder. But as the game wore on --- UGA was blowing out Wisconsin --- teammates started a chant: "Hustle Man! Hustle Man!" Finally, the coach complied and put him in on a kickoff team, his one play as a Bulldog.

The scenario reads like the script of "Rudy," the feel-good movie documenting the scrappy Notre Dame practice teamer who got in one play in his career. Singleton shook his head at the comparison. "I was a lot better player than Rudy," he said with a flash of residual frustration. "I deserved to play."

But, he said, negative energy always inspired him. That was just one more motivator.

Soon after graduating college, he married Commaleta Sims, a classmate who grew up near Perry Homes and attended Archer. In high school, she was drawn to Singleton, noticing how he treated teachers with respect, a rare quality in that environment, she said.

With a growing family, he threw himself into earning a living and working his craft. He performed in local theater, worked as the Atlanta Braves mascot "Homer," tied balloons and painted kids' faces at birthday parties and worked shifts at Subway.

By early 2002, he decided it was time to take his shot. He took on the name "IronE" (he pronounces it "irony"), a moniker that portrays an image of strength and makes him stand out. He left the family behind in Atlanta and drove to Los Angeles, where he shared a rooming house bedroom, waited tables and took his chances in Hollywood casting cattle calls. Night after night, a dispirited Singleton called Commaleta or Uncle Larry looking for affirmation. And the next day, he'd go out and do it again.
Three months of no auditions and rising credit card balances sent Singleton back home, where he tried another path --- opening a costume store. He was not inhibited by the risk of entrepreneurship.

"There was no problem with failing, because coming from where we do, you don't have far to fall," he said.

The store eventually did fail, so he had another idea --- become a lawyer. But UGA law school declined his application.

Undeterred, he kept at it. In 2006, he appeared in "Somebodies," a low-budget film directed by a UGA friend, Hadjii Hand. The film fired him up and led him to roll the dice to get himself noticed. In 2008 he wrote a one-man show, rehearsed it in his garage, used his last few thousand dollars to rent out the 14th Street Playhouse and then put on "IronE ... The Resurrected."

It was a gutsy move. Few people knew who IronE was nor would they care he was resurrected. He saw it as an opportunity to take matters into his own hands and jump-start his career. He played a litany of characters in the biographical rant, singing, dancing, rapping and displaying a linebacker's physicality.

Commaleta helped produce and direct, also running the sound effects and music. Uncle Larry served as MC and usher. Crowds were enthusiastic but thin, and the show closed with barely a ripple on the theater scene.

As Singleton plotted his next move, his career showed a pulse. "Resurrected," coupled with "Somebodies," had put his unusual name out there. An agent contacted him. Sandra Bullock, a Hollywood A-lister was starring in the "The Blind Side" about a young man from the ghetto making it to the NFL. They needed a bad guy, a street hood. You interested?

Singleton auditioned for the role of Alton, a thug from the Memphis projects who confronts Bullock in a key scene in the movie. He was pumped up going to the audition. "Wow, I know this guy," he told himself. "This is my role." A month later, he got the part. Singleton appeared in three scenes, including a couple shot in a now-closed Atlanta housing project. The movie became a juggernaut and reportedly grossed $300 million. Singleton, for his part, got $7,000 up front and maybe eight times more as the movie gained momentum.

In 2010, his agent pitched him a role in the upcoming series, "The Walking Dead," an apocalyptic tale of zombies shot in Atlanta for AMC. He wasn't that enthused but figured, why not?

Originally, he assumed the character, a man named T-Dog, might last a couple episodes.

In his first episode, T-Dog got beat up in a scene on a downtown Atlanta rooftop and then fled the city to a camp set up by survivors. The next episode's plot had several characters heading back into zombie-infested Atlanta to save a man left behind.

Reading the script of that upcoming episode, Singleton recounted his reaction: "I'm like, 'Please don't let me go into the city because I'm going to die there.' "Fortunately for both T-Dog and Singleton, he didn't.

"The Walking Dead" became a huge hit, setting ratings records for a cable show. Its popularity stems from having a strong ensemble cast of characters who can --- and often do --- get horrifically dispatched at any moment by flesh-eating zombies.

Before each episode, Commaleta said the couple would rush to the mailbox to get the new script, tearing open the envelope and reading from back to front to make sure T-Dog made it through the episode alive. For 21 episodes he did.
But before last season’s fourth episode was shot, Singleton got a tap on the shoulder by a producer, who kindly told him this was it. It was like a coach calling a player into his office to cut him.

Actor Scott Wilson, who plays Hershel on the show (and starred as one of the killers in the classic 1967 movie "In Cold Blood"), befriended Singleton off set, enjoying his energy and personality and impressed by his life story.

Before Singleton left, the veteran Wilson told him, "Be true to yourself and follow your instincts. Believe in yourself and carry yourself with confidence."

Then, Wilson, whose career has soared and stalled over the years, added, "Keep working."

In the months since, Singleton has aimed to do that. His brief splash of fame was heartening but now he must find a part that will pay the bills and advance his career. Atlanta has increasingly become a hot center for making movies, but Singleton knows nothing is guaranteed so he hustles, always looking.

It’s a tale he has recounted in his recently released self-published autobiography, "Blindsided by the Walking Dead."

For now, he’s enjoying time with his family, taking his kids to soccer games, track meets and school recitals. He jokes his new job is suburban soccer dad and chauffeur for his kids, daughters Heavven and Neveah, 16 and 12 respectively, and son Ethereal, 9. His wife, a photographer, is a steady force in life who helps manage his career.

Singleton lives in an airy home in rural Paulding County on a small lake, the antithesis of Perry Homes.

His goal was always to make it in something — football, business, acting. Something. And to be there for his children, to provide for them. He always knew his children would not grow up like he did. They would have a loving father and mother. They wouldn’t want for anything.

He sees that as his most important role. And, in that, he has been a success.

Learn more about Robert "IronE" Singleton in a special video presentation at myajc.com.

About the reporter and photographer

Bill Torpy joined The Atlanta Journal-Constitution in 1990. He has covered former Mayor Bill Campbell’s corruption trial, the 2006 police shooting of Kathryn Johnston and many other stories involving state and city politics. Torpy is a native of Chicago, a graduate of Southern Illinois University and previously worked for the Daily Southtown in Chicago.

Johnny Crawford started with the AJC 27 years ago as an intern after graduating from Morehouse College. He is the beat photographer for Georgia Tech football and has also covered NASCAR events and the Olympics in Atlanta, Norway and China. He also teaches photography classes at the Smyrna Community Center.

Next week: Freshman Congressman Doug Collins finds his niche in the nation’s capital. Personal Journeys

A Sunday feature that spotlights the lives of extraordinary individuals and the stories that define our region and connect our community. PJ

HOW WE GOT THE STORY
As the person who assigns the book reviews for the AJC, I am tasked with sorting through the hundreds of books sent to us each week by publishers seeking press for their titles. The first thing I look for is whether the book has local connections. When a memoir by the actor who played T-Dog on "The Walking Dead" crossed my desk, my curiosity was piqued. As I leafed through the pages and learned about IronE's childhood in Perry Homes, I knew I held a good story in my hands. The book didn't sit on my desk long before reporter Bill Torpy, who had been researching some of Atlanta's public housing projects, spotted it and agreed with me that it was a Personal Journey waiting to happen. It's an inspiring story about how personal conviction and a desire for something better can change the course of a life.

Suzanne Van Atten
Features Enterprise Editor
personaljourneys@ajc.com

AUTHOR EVENT
IronE Singleton signs copies of "Blindsided by the Walking Dead."
Noon-2 p.m., Tuesday, Barnes & Noble, 1939 Mount Zion Road, Morrow, 770-471-2227.
Also 5-7 p.m. Tuesday, Barnes & Noble, 1350 Scenic Highway, Snellville, 770-979-0138.

Tell us your Personal Journey at personaljourneys@ajc.com

LOAD-DATE: May 12, 2013

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May 10, 2013 Friday

SECTION: BUSINESS
LENGTH: 1146 words
HEADLINE: A Strong Response to Paying Board Nominees
BYLINE: STEVEN M. DAVIDOFF
HIGHLIGHT:

Eight partners at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz are proposing that company boards consider adopting a bylaw prohibiting shareholder activists from compensating director nominees.
The stakes just got higher for shareholder activists.

Responding to hedge funds' efforts to give incentives to nominees to company boards, the law firm Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz in essence came over the top on Thursday in a memo distributed to clients. Signed by the leading deal lawyer Martin Lipton and seven other Wachtell partners, the memo proposes that company boards consider adopting a bylaw prohibiting shareholder activists from compensating director nominees. Excluded from this prohibition are out-of-pocket expenses and payments for indemnification.

Wachtell's proposal takes square aim at a topic I recently wrote about: the payment by hedge funds of large amounts of incentive compensation to director nominees. The issue has come to light because of two recent activist situations. Paul Singer's Elliott Management has nominated five directors to the 14-member board of Hess while Barry Rosenstein's Jana Partners recently lost a contest to elect five directors to Agrium's 12-member board. In both cases, the hedge funds' director nominees were provided with incentive compensation linked to the performance of the companies' shares that had the potential to pay them millions of dollars.

Since then a mini-debate has broken out online among law professors over whether these payments are legal or appropriate. Wachtell, which has done battle before with academics over their views in support of shareholders, is now citing two academics who are on its side.

The first is John C. Coffee Jr., the Columbia Law School professor, who stated that these "third-party bonuses create the wrong incentives, fragment the board and imply a shift toward both the short-term and higher risk."

Meanwhile, Professor Stephen Bainbridge of the UCLA School of Law has written extensively on this subject and summed up his feelings by stating that "if this nonsense is not illegal, it ought to be."

On the other side, several equally well-respected academics have signed off on these arrangements, even allowing themselves to be quoted in Elliott's materials. In this corner we have Professor Randall Thomas of Vanderbilt Law School who said this approach made sense because it "lends itself to allowing these nominees, if elected, to focus on independent decision-making and fulfilling their fiduciary obligations on behalf of shareholders." Another professor quoted in the materials is Larry Cunningham of George Washington University Law School who later argued that all of this "is intended to align the interests of those directors with those of the company's shareholders."

As you might suspect with all of this debate, many issues are being raised about whether these directors can be deemed independent, whether they have different incentives and whether this whole arrangement is even appropriate. Another law professor, Usha Rodrigues of the University of Georgia Law School, offers her own views on this while summarizing the state of play.

But as before and without wading into this feeding frenzy, I am a bit wary of these arrangements. I can see the need that hedge funds have to find director nominees and to attract the most qualified they need to be compensated. This compensation is all disclosed, so shareholders and other directors can monitor the situation and refuse to re-elect directors if the payment turns out to be inappropriate.

But I also have a "here we go again" view. Are we now going to do for director compensation what we did for chief executive compensation and spiral it all higher? The assumption that aligning incentives must be a good thing brings to mind that line from Whitney Houston that "the children are the future." Of course they are the future, but it doesn't really mean anything more than that.

(Full disclosure: I am not only an academic, I have on occasion listened to Whitney Houston.) Another way to look at this is to examine what happened at Apple. Does anyone think that Apple would not have performed as well if it had paid Al Gore a couple of million dollars to be a director instead of tens of millions of dollars?
Still, though I am wary about incentive compensation for directors coming directly from hedge funds, I think that the issue is worth discussing and examining. And let's be clear, in the case of Hess I believe the real issue is the company's extremely poor relative performance over the years and which slate of directors is best situated to take the company forward.

But while making good points about the flaws of this compensation, Mr. Lipton and the lawyers at Wachtell aim to shut down the entire practice. This includes not only the potentially multimillion-dollar payments that Elliot and Jana agreed to, but the common practice of "tipping" hedge fund director nominees anywhere from $15,000 to $150,000 for just agreeing to be nominated. In fact, this type of tipping is really the more common practice than the most recent incentive compensation.

If Wachtell's bylaw is adopted widely, and I suspect it will see some momentum, directors will have to agree to be nominated out of the goodness of their hearts. In other words, the bylaw not only strikes at the incentive compensation that is being the debated but the more common "tipping" arrangements that are not.

In fairness, Wachtell states in the memo that this bylaw will not stop directors from receiving compensation if they are elected or the hedge fund from paying them if they are not. But if you read the proposed bylaw, it is so broadly worded that any arrangements to compensate director nominees who do not get elected after the fact would be prohibited. Moreover, the bylaw continues another worrying trend in corporate law. The use of bylaw amendments by boards to shut down, or severely inhibit, shareholder activism. Most recently, Commonwealth REIT successfully defended in a Maryland court the adoption of a bylaw requiring arbitration of shareholder disputes. The net effect was to halt for an indeterminate period a shareholder activist campaign by Related and Corvex.

In this case, Wachtell's bylaw could chill shareholder activist activity by making it harder to obtain qualified director nominees. Again, it may be that this compensation should be regulated or monitored, but wouldn't it be better for this to be done in consultation with shareholders rather than unilaterally by the board. Institutional Shareholder Services, the large and influential proxy adviser, for example, has yet to take a position on the issue, which has just burst on the scene.

So while Wachtell is certainly raising the stakes in response to activists, and should be credited with raising good points that need to be addressed about this type of compensation, it still may be too much too early.
Rural Georgia struggles to get lawyer

By DAN CHAPMAN - The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

FORT GAINES, Ga. -- Ryan Wheeler, graduating from law school in Atlanta this month, needs a job.

Clay County, a rural southwest Georgia community without a full-time, private-practice attorney, needs all the legal help it can get.

A match made in heaven?

Hardly.

Despite the job-search difficulty facing the newly minted graduates of Georgia State, Emory, the University of Georgia, Mercer and other law schools, few will end up practicing in rural Georgia, where legal representation is sorely lacking.

New lawyers - saddled sometimes with $100,000 in student debt - can't afford to practice where people can't afford to pay them. Plus, the rural lifestyle doesn't always appeal to urban-bred attorneys.

While the poor across Georgia struggle to get legal help, the challenges are amplified in rural areas with greater poverty and higher unemployment rates. And, unlike in metro Atlanta, rural Georgians may have to travel upwards of 50 miles to find an attorney.

State, federal and bar association officials talk periodically about ways to boost rural legal representation. They eye subsidies and loan-forgiveness programs that have increased the number of doctors practicing in rural areas. Money, though, particularly with post-recession austerity, is hard to come by.

A half-dozen Georgia counties have no private-practice lawyers, according to the State Bar of Georgia. Another five counties tally only one. Meanwhile, 81 percent of the state's 15,000 lawyers work in metro Atlanta, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports, where slightly more than half of the state's population resides.

By law, criminal defendants who are poor must be represented. But thousands of Georgians who need help with divorce, Medicaid eligibility, collections fraud, child custody or other civil cases can't afford legal representation.

Some get free help from the Georgia Legal Services Program, a nonprofit offering aid outside Atlanta.

"There is such an inability to help people so in need of legal services. It's frustrating," said Cheryl Griffin, a circuit-riding Legal Services attorney in Albany whose caseload has doubled the last five years. "It leads to a legal system where people feel they don't have a voice."

Wheeler, who's on track to graduate May 17 from Georgia State University with $40,000 in law school debt, can't envision practicing in a place like Fort Gaines, which has no traffic light or fast-food restaurant.

"It's not that it's less worthy. It just doesn't jive with my personality," he said.
Rural Georgia struggles to get lawyer

Wheeler, 33, is well aware, though, of the employment challenges that await new lawyers. One of every three 2012 Georgia graduates who passed the state bar exam hasn't found full-time work, according to the American Bar Association. While job prospects increased slightly from the previous year, the overall unemployment rate for Georgia attorneys - 11.5 percent - is well above the overall state rate.

Emory University, with 73 percent of its 2012 law grads fully employed as lawyers, topped the Georgia placement list. At UGA, 69 percent of grads had jobs. About two-thirds of Georgia State grads were employed too, the ABA reported.

"It's real grim out there," said Wheeler, who'd like to open a solo practice in Atlanta handling personal-injury, DUI and landlord-tenant disputes. "I don't have anything lined up."

The recession hammered the legal profession. Firms cut back hiring and laid off attorneys. Or they outsourced legal research and document preparation to non-lawyers. Online, do-it-yourself legal forms further eroded attorney employment.

"The market has been tough since 2008 for law school grads," said David O'Brien, director of legal career services at the UGA School of Law. "But there is still a lot of need for legal representation. Whether the market can support paying for lawyers is a different question."

In Clay, 36 percent of residents live below the federal poverty line of $23,550 for a family of four. The school system is the county's largest employer. Many residents cross the Chattahoochee River into Alabama to work at a chicken plant 45 minutes away.

Only 3,156 people live in Clay, 175 miles south of Atlanta, and the population is declining. Even if they could afford a lawyer, the pickings are slim. Terry Marlowe opens the only Fort Gaines law office just one day a week.

"It's a very limited market," said Marlowe, who works most days in Albany, 75 miles away. "People there just don't have a lot of money. If somebody is looking to go to a rural area like Fort Gaines and make a really good living, well, that's not going to happen."

Griffin visits Fort Gaines on the first Wednesday of every month. She handles 50 to 60 cases at a time across nine counties.

Her clients, including Lem Battle, pay nothing. Battle, 48 and jobless, needed a divorce. Griffin helped him get one a year ago with a restraining order against his wife and without alimony payments.

Battle, with Griffin by his side at the Clay County Public Library, said, "She's like an angel to me, like my guardian angel."

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$41K vs. $145K

Most law school grads don't go into public-interest law, like Legal Services, and most don't go into rural America. Albany, Bainbridge, Valdosta and Waycross, for example, count only one UGA 2012 law school grad. About 105 of UGA's 229 graduates from last year work in metro Atlanta.

"I wouldn't envision that very many people from large, suburban towns would be interested in going to rural areas where they have no family connections or footholds to get a law firm started," said Henry Balkcom, the newly elected probate judge in Quitman County who left an Atlanta law firm in 2006 to return home to Georgetown. "I'm sure that some lawyers would forgo a high-dollar career for work like Ms. Griffin's, but not many."

Legal Services attorneys start at around $41,000 a year in salary and get some loan-forgiveness assistance. The annual mean wage for an Atlanta attorney last year was $145,010, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Nationwide, though, the median starting salary for lawyers continues to decline from $72,000 in 2009 to $60,000 in 2012.

"If it were not for my loans I would love to be a rural practitioner," said GSU's Josh Ryden, a Newnan resident who
Rural Georgia struggles to get lawyer | Fort Mill Times - Fort Mill, SC

http://www.fortmilltimes.com/2013/05/12/v-print/2684187/rural-georgia... 

will graduate next year with more than $100,000 in grad and undergrad debt.

The federal government subsidizes doctors, nurses and dentists to work in underserved communities. Could a similar program work for lawyers? South Dakota, for example, will soon start a pilot program to subsidize 16 lawyers with $12,000 a year provided they stick around for five years.

In Georgia, though, there's little talk of additional government or bar association assistance for rural lawyers. Superior Court Judge Joe Bishop has asked the General Assembly for money to hire part-time legal help for people who can't afford an attorney and try to represent themselves. No luck.

"When you talk about people being represented in a civil case by a lawyer, or putting a doctor on the ground to look after sick babies, the politics are such that it would be difficult to do," said Bishop, who circuit-rides a seven-county region of Southwest Georgia.

Law schools make varying efforts to steer grads to rural areas. At UGA, for example, the Rural South Law Society connects students with rural lawyers and politicians who encourage grads to consider underserved areas.

For the most part, though, the rural poor get by with pro-bono legal assistance, do-it-yourself kits or the likes of Cheryl Griffin, who started her Wednesday in Quitman County with a grandmother seeking legal custody of a granddaughter.

At the library - a non-threatening environment that attracts clients - Griffin unspooled a litany of her cases that might have ended badly without access to an attorney: the mother of two kids seeking a divorce from an abusive husband; the elderly, little-educated lady threatened by a collection agency; and the Medicaid recipient wrongly evicted from a nursing home.

"It's never a dull moment," Griffin said.

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Aaron's appoints former Equifax exec SVP

May 13, 2013
By Vivian Gomez

ATLANTA — Aaron's, a lease-to-own retailer specializing in the sales and lease ownership of residential furniture, consumer electronics, home appliances and accessories, has appointed Robert W. Kamerschen as the company's new SVP and general counsel.

Kamerschen will be responsible for managing all legal and governmental affairs for Aaron's, including employment law, regulatory matters, intellectual property, litigation, vendor relationships, financings, acquisitions and other general legal matters. As general counsel, he will report directly to chairman, president and CEO Ronald W. Allen.

"Robbie has a lengthy career in corporate governance and has been recognized as one of Georgia's leading attorneys," said Allen. "We're confident that his extensive experience in corporate legal counsel and regulatory affairs will be a tremendous asset to Aaron's."

In 2012, both the Fulton County Daily Report and Georgia Trend magazine recognized Kamerschen for his legal work. The Fulton County Daily Report named Equifax's legal department, led by Kamerschen, the "Legal Department of the Year" and he was included in Georgia Trend's "Legal Elite" list.

Prior to joining Aaron's, Kamerschen served at Equifax since 2008 as the U.S. Chief Counsel, SVP and chief compliance officer. He was responsible for the management of the U.S. legal function, compliance and governmental relations. Before that, he served as VP of law and public policy at ChoicePoint. Earlier in his career, he was general counsel to EzGov and practiced law in the Atlanta office of Troutman Sanders. At Troutman Sanders, Kamerschen's practice focused on regulatory law and litigation.

Before attending law school, Kamerschen worked on Capitol Hill for U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (AL) and played minor league baseball in the Philadelphia Phillies organization. He is a graduate of Stanford University and an honors graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law.

Source URL: http://www.retailingtoday.com/article/aarons-appoints-former-equifax-exec-svp
Associate dean of academic affairs named for UGA School of Law

UGA News Service | Posted: Monday, May 13, 2013 8:57 am

Lonnie T. Brown Jr., who joined the University of Georgia School of Law faculty in 2002, will become the school’s associate dean of academic affairs July 1, upon the retirement of Paul M. Kurtz.

Georgia Law Dean Rebecca Hanner White said she was pleased Brown agreed to take on this important responsibility at the school. “I am confident Lonnie will do an excellent job for us all,” she said.

Brown is not a stranger to the administrative side of academic life. For the 2007-08 year, he served as the inaugural administrative fellow in UGA’s Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. This full-time, one-year fellowship exposed him to the inner workings of academic administration, including university governance, promotion and tenure, crisis response, policy development and budgeting.

Specializing in civil procedure and legal ethics, Brown is the current holder of the A. Gus Cleveland Distinguished Chair of Legal Ethics and Professionalism at the law school. He is also very active in the broader legal community, serving on the Drafting Committee for the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam and on the State Bar of Georgia Formal Advisory Opinion Board. Additionally, he was recently selected by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia as the principal substantive consultant for the court’s Local Rules Revision Project.

Brown has received the Student Bar Association’s Professionalism Award six times and has been presented with the Ellington Award for Excellence in Teaching. On two occasions, he was selected to be an honorary faculty marshal at graduation. At the university level, Brown has served as a Senior Teaching Fellow, and he is a member of the UGA Teaching Academy.

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Brown earned his Juris Doctor from Vanderbilt University, where he was editor-in-chief of the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Emory University, where he was student body president and the recipient of the Marion Luther Brittain Award, Emory’s highest student honor.
Aaron's, Inc. (NYSE: AAN), a lease-to-own retailer specializing in the sales and lease ownership of residential furniture, consumer electronics, home appliances and accessories, announced today Robert W. Kamerschen has joined the Company as Senior Vice President and General Counsel.

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Before attending law school, Kamerschen worked on Capitol Hill for U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (AL) and played minor league baseball in the Philadelphia Phillies organization. He is a graduate of Stanford University and an honors graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law.

About Aaron's, Inc.
Brittney Denise Diggs of Savannah, Georgia, and Geoffrey Alan Alls of Savannah, Georgia, were married on Saturday, December 29, 2012, at the Jepson Center for the Arts in Savannah.

The Bride was given in marriage by her mother, Gail Bush Diggs, and father, D. Lester Diggs. Bro. Johnny Kinsey of Augusta, Georgia, officiated.

The Bride is a daughter of Gail Bush Diggs of Aiken and D. Lester Diggs, of Hilton Head, South Carolina. She is the granddaughter of the late Menthalee Bush and the late Susie R. Bush. Paternal grandparents are the late George Diggs and the late Clara Diggs.

The Groom is the son of Andrea White Alls and the late Howard Alls, of Savannah, Georgia. Maternal grandparents are the late George and the late Alberta White of Savannah. Paternal grandparents are the late Eugene and the late Alberta Alls.

Natalie Simone Diggs of Columbia, SC, sister of the bride, and Elise Alls of Atlanta, sister of the groom, served as maids of honor. Bridesmaids were Sylvia Alls of Savannah, sister of the bride, Trelles Mealer of Aiken, cousin of the bride, Tia
Smith, Esq., of Atlanta, Ga., Candace Duvernay, Esq., of Atlanta, Ga., Elizabeth Goueti, Esq., of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Nydia Pouyes, Esq., of Washington, DC, all friends of the Bride.

James Riley of Atlanta, Ga., served as Best Man. Groomsmen were Willie Alls of Savannah, Ga., cousin of the Groom, Almuhtada Smith, Esq., of Los Angeles, CA, William Sharp of New York, NY, Allen Parks, Sr. of Atlanta, Ga., and Ricardo Glover of Raleigh, NC, all friends of the Groom.

Makana Edwards, cousin of the bride, was the flower girl, and Aleric Edwards of Aiken was the Ringbearer.

The Bride is a 2002 graduate of Aiken High School. She received her B. A. in International Affairs/Political Science in 2005 from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Fla., and her Juris Doctor from The University of Georgia School of Law in Athens, Ga., in 2009. She is the Ombudsmen for Savannah State University, and teaches at both SSU and the University of Phoenix Savannah Campus.

She is also employed by Chatham County Juvenile Court.

The Bridegroom is a 2001 graduate of Beach High School in Savannah, Ga., received his B. A. in Political Science from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Ga., and his Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law in 2009.

He is a member of the Law Firm of Charles Bell & Associates in Savannah, Georgia.

The couple will reside in Savannah, Georgia.

LOAD-DATE: May 13, 2013

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The New York Times Blogs
(DealBook)

May 10, 2013 Friday

SECTION: BUSINESS

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HEADLINE: A Strong Response to Paying Board Nominees

BYLINE: STEVEN M. DAVIDOFF

HIGHLIGHT:

Eight partners at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz are proposing that company boards consider adopting a bylaw prohibiting shareholder activists from compensating director nominees.

BODY:

The stakes just got higher for shareholder activists.
Responding to hedge funds' efforts to give incentives to nominees to company boards, the law firm Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz in essence came over the top on Thursday in a memo distributed to clients. Signed by the leading deal lawyer Martin Lipton and seven other Wachtell partners, the memo proposes that company boards consider adopting a bylaw prohibiting shareholder activists from compensating director nominees. Excluded from this prohibition are out-of-pocket expenses and payments for indemnification.

Wachtell's proposal takes square aim at a topic I recently wrote about: the payment by hedge funds of large amounts of incentive compensation to director nominees. The issue has come to light because of two recent activist situations. Paul Singer's Elliott Management has nominated five directors to the 14-member board of Hess while Barry Rosenstein's Jana Partners recently lost a contest to elect five directors to Agrium's 12-member board. In both cases, the hedge funds' director nominees were provided with incentive compensation linked to the performance of the companies' shares that had the potential to pay them millions of dollars.

Since then a mini-debate has broken out online among law professors over whether these payments are legal or appropriate. Wachtell, which has done battle before with academics over their views in support of shareholders, is now citing two academics who are on its side.

The first is John C. Coffee Jr., the Columbia Law School professor, who stated that these "third-party bonuses create the wrong incentives, fragment the board and imply a shift toward both the short-term and higher risk."

Meanwhile, Professor Stephen Bainbridge of the UCLA School of Law has written extensively on this subject and summed up his feelings by stating that "if this nonsense is not illegal, it ought to be."

On the other side, several equally well-respected academics have signed off on these arrangements, even allowing themselves to be quoted in Elliott's materials. In this corner we have Professor Randall Thomas of Vanderbilt Law School who said this approach made sense because it "lends itself to allowing these nominees, if elected, to focus on independent decision-making and fulfilling their fiduciary obligations on behalf of shareholders." Another professor quoted in the materials is Larry Cunningham of George Washington University Law School who later argued that all of this "is intended to align the interests of those directors with those of the company's shareholders."

As you might suspect with all of this debate, many issues are being raised about whether these directors can be deemed independent, whether they have different incentives and whether this whole arrangement is even appropriate. Another law professor, Usha Rodrigues of the University of Georgia Law School, offers her own views on this while summarizing the state of play.

But as before and without wading into this feeding frenzy, I am a bit wary of these arrangements. I can see the need that hedge funds have to find director nominees and to attract the most qualified they need to be compensated. This compensation is all disclosed, so shareholders and other directors can monitor the situation and refuse to re-elect directors if the payment turns out to be inappropriate.

But I also have a "here we go again" view. Are we now going to do for director compensation what we did for chief executive compensation and spiral it all higher? The assumption that aligning incentives must be a good thing brings to mind that line from Whitney Houston that "the children are the future." Of course they are the future, but it doesn't really mean anything more than that.

(Full disclosure: I am not only an academic, I have on occasion listened to Whitney Houston.) Another way to look at this is to examine what happened at Apple. Does anyone think that Apple would not have performed as well if it had paid Al Gore a couple of million dollars to be a director instead of tens of millions of dollars?

Still, though I am wary about incentive compensation for directors coming directly from hedge funds, I think that the issue is worth discussing and examining. And let's be clear, in the case of Hess I believe the real issue is the company's
extremely poor relative performance over the years and which slate of directors is best situated to take the company forward.

But while making good points about the flaws of this compensation, Mr. Lipton and the lawyers at Wachtell aim to shut down the entire practice. This includes not only the potentially multimillion-dollar payments that Elliot and Jana agreed to, but the common practice of "tipping" hedge fund director nominees anywhere from $15,000 to $150,000 for just agreeing to be nominated. In fact, this type of tipping is really the more common practice than the most recent incentive compensation.

If Wachtell's bylaw is adopted widely, and I suspect it will see some momentum, directors will have to agree to be nominated out of the goodness of their hearts. In other words, the bylaw not only strikes at the incentive compensation that is being the debated but the more common "tipping" arrangements that are not.

In fairness, Wachtell states in the memo that this bylaw will not stop directors from receiving compensation if they are elected or the hedge fund from paying them if they are not. But if you read the proposed bylaw, it is so broadly worded that any arrangements to compensate director nominees who do not get elected after the fact would be prohibited. Moreover, the bylaw continues another worrying trend in corporate law. The use of bylaw amendments by boards to shut down, or severely inhibit, shareholder activism. Most recently, Commonwealth REIT successfully defended in a Maryland court the adoption of a bylaw requiring arbitration of shareholder disputes. The net effect was to halt for an indeterminate period a shareholder activist campaign by Related and Corvex.

In this case, Wachtell's bylaw could chill shareholder activist activity by making it harder to obtain qualified director nominees. Again, it may be that this compensation should be regulated or monitored, but wouldn't it be better for this to be done in consultation with shareholders rather than unilaterally by the board. Institutional Shareholder Services, the large and influential proxy adviser, for example, has yet to take a position on the issue, which has just burst on the scene.

So while Wachtell is certainly raising the stakes in response to activists, and should be credited with raising good points that need to be addressed about this type of compensation, it still may be too much too early.
ATHENS, Ga., May 13 -- The University of Georgia issued the following news release:

Lonnie T. Brown Jr., who joined the University of Georgia School of Law faculty in 2002, will become the school's associate dean of academic affairs July 1, upon the retirement of Paul M. Kurtz.

Georgia Law Dean Rebecca Hanner White said she was pleased Brown agreed to take on this important responsibility at the school. "I am confident Lonnie will do an excellent job for us all," she said.

Brown is not a stranger to the administrative side of academic life. For the 2007-08 year, he served as the inaugural administrative fellow in UGA's Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. This full-time, one-year fellowship exposed him to the inner workings of academic administration, including university governance, promotion and tenure, crisis response, policy development and budgeting.

Specializing in civil procedure and legal ethics, Brown is the current holder of the A. Gus Cleveland Distinguished Chair of Legal Ethics and Professionalism at the law school. He is also very active in the broader legal community, serving on the Drafting Committee for the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam and on the State Bar of Georgia Formal Advisory Opinion Board.

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Prior to coming to Athens, Brown was an assistant professor at the University of Illinois College of Law and a visiting assistant professor at Vanderbilt University. He served as a judicial clerk for Judge William C. O'Kelley of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia. Additionally, he practiced law as an associate and a partner at Alston & Bird in Atlanta from 1991 to 1999.
Brown earned his Juris Doctor from Vanderbilt University, where he was editor-in-chief of the Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law. He earned his bachelor's degree from Emory University, where he was student body president and the recipient of the Marion Luther Brittain Award, Emory's highest student honor. For any query with respect to this article or any other content requirement, please contact Editor at htsyndication@hindustantimes.com

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Stefanie Lindquist named dean of UGA School of Public and International Affairs

By UGA NEWS SERVICE updated Tuesday, May 14, 2013 - 10:28pm

Stefanie A. Lindquist, an associate dean at the University of Texas at Austin and a scholar who works at the interface of law and politics, has been named dean of the University of Georgia School of Public and International Affairs.

Lindquist, who began her academic career nearly 20 years ago at UGA, is the Charles Alan Wright Chair in Federal Courts and associate dean for external affairs at the University of Texas School of Law.

The appointment was announced by Jere Morehead, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. The deans of the 17 schools and colleges at UGA report to the provost.

"I am very pleased that Dr. Lindquist is returning to UGA as dean of the School of Public and International Affairs," said UGA President Michael F. Adams. "She is widely regarded as one of the bright young faculty stars in her field, and knows both SPIA and UGA deeply and well. She will be a strong addition to our very good leadership team."

The search committee was chaired by Rebecca White, dean of the UGA School of Law, and assisted by the UGA Search Group in Human Resources. Lindquist’s appointment is effective Aug. 1.

"Dr. Lindquist’s record of outstanding leadership in a variety of roles, including serving as an interim dean at the University of Texas, and her ability to garner support from alumni and other donors make her ideally suited to lead our nationally prominent
Stefanie Lindquist named dean of UGA School of Public and International Affairs,” Morehead said. “Her scholarship and teaching have been repeatedly recognized for excellence, and I am confident that she will enhance the exemplary programs of research and teaching that the school offers.”

As associate dean for external affairs for the University of Texas School of Law, Lindquist is engaged in fundraising and alumni relations for a law school that is ranked fourth among public universities and 15th among all U.S. law schools by U.S. News and World Report. Her research focuses on judicial behavior in the federal and state appellate courts, and she holds a courtesy appointment in the department of government. She joined the UT Austin School of Law in 2008 and also has served as its interim dean and associate dean for academic affairs.

She is the author or co-author of more than 50 journal articles, book chapters, essays and legal notes, as well as two books. In “Measuring Judicial Activism” (Oxford University Press, 2009) she and co-author Frank Cross identified objective, empirical measures of judicial activism on the United States Supreme Court. In her 2006 book, “Judging on a Collegial Court: Influences on Appellate Court Decision Making” (University of Virginia Press), Lindquist and her co-authors evaluated factors that influenced circuit court judges’ decisions to dissent, concur and reverse the lower court.

Prior to joining the UT Austin School of Law, she was an associate professor of political science and law at Vanderbilt University, with a primary appointment in the department of political science. She started her academic career at UGA in 1996, joining the department of political science as well as the department of public administration and policy, with an adjunct appointment in the School of Law. She was named associate professor at UGA in 2003.

Lindquist was a 2002 recipient of the Richard B. Russell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, UGA’s highest early career teaching honor. She also received the J. Hatten Howard Teaching Award from the UGA Honors Program and was recognized for excellence in teaching by the graduate student organization in the department of public administration and by the Student Government Organization. She was a participant in
Stefanie Lindquist named dean of UGA School of Public and Internat... 

the Lilly Teaching Fellows program, which provides opportunities for faculty to further develop their teaching skills, from 2000 to 2001, and later served as co-director of the program. She also coached the UGA Mock Trial Team, was a faculty mentor in the Honors Program and faculty adviser to the Demosthenian Literary Society. At Vanderbilt, she received the Robert Birkby Award for Excellence in Teaching Political Science and served as director of the graduate program.

Lindquist was the 2011 recipient of the best conference paper award from the law and courts section of the American Political Science Association, served as chair of the APSA law and courts section from 2008 to 2009 and was the program chair for the section's annual meeting in 2008. She is the recipient of two National Science Foundation grants and served as a panel member at the NSF Law and Social Sciences Division for two years. She has served on the editorial board of the Journal of Politics since 2010 and on the editorial board of the Review of Public Personnel Administration since 2004. She also has served on the editorial board of the Law and Society Review.

Lindquist holds a bachelor's degree from Ursinus College in Pennsylvania and a doctorate from the University of South Carolina with an emphasis in American politics, public law and public administration. She earned her J.D. from Temple University in Philadelphia, where she served as editor in chief of the Temple Law Review.

Following law school, she clerked for the Honorable Anthony J. Scirica at the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia and practiced law at Latham and Watkins in Washington, D.C. She also worked for one year as a research associate at the Federal Judicial Center in Washington D.C. assisting committees of the Federal Judicial Conference in addressing questions of judicial administration.

"I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to lead SPIA—a school that over its 12-year history has already distinguished itself as among the most prominent public affairs schools in the nation," Lindquist said. "Under the able leadership of its inaugural dean, Tom Lauth, and through the efforts of its dedicated faculty, students, and staff, SPIA has established an impressive set of educational programs and initiatives that enhance student learning and civic engagement, and that deepen our understanding of governance and democracy. I look forward to building on these strengths and promoting SPIA's important
S puts mission both here and abroad.

The UGA School of Public and International Affairs prepares undergraduate students for good citizenship and careers in public life and trains future generations of teachers and scholars in the fields of international affairs, political science and public administration and policy. The school currently is ranked by U.S. News & World Report as the nation's fourth best public affairs graduate school. For more information about the school, see http://spia.uga.edu/.
Associate dean from University of Texas named dean of UGA School of Public and International Affairs

Stefanie A. Lundquist

Stefanie A. Lundquist, new dean at UGA’s School of Public and International Affairs

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It was an idea whose time had definitely come.

The United Way Women's Legacy Council decided to hold an event for and about women in leadership and soon found they had a sell-out on their hands.

Billed as "Women Who Rule Savannah," Tuesday's luncheon and panel discussion at the Westin Savannah Harbor featured five local leaders from government, the medical field, business, education and the judicial system who make a difference in the community, both through example and advocacy.

Mary Chatman, chief operating officer and chief nursing officer of Memorial University Medical Center, developed her leadership skills as a nursing assistant while still in school in another state.

"I watched how management interacted with the NA's," she said. "I saw the good and the bad, the respect and the lack of it. When I confronted a manager who was taking advantage of a 62-year-old assistant, she said wasn't particularly happy. I told her I had been taught to treat all people with respect, especially those in your charge.

"After all, the same person working for you today may someday be your boss," she said.

"Wouldn't you know, 10 years later, I was her boss."

Savannah Mayor Edna Jackson nodded and added she learned the same lesson from one of her early mentors, the late Superior Court Judge Eugene Gadsden.

"He told me to remember that the people you meet going up the ladder are the same people you'll see going down," she said.

Brynn Grant looked at the tough times as important moments in shaping the person and leader she is today.

Suddenly finding herself a single mother with three children — one a sick newborn — could have sent her entire life and career into a tailspin. Instead, it helped shape the leader she is today.

"Those times I struggled the most, I learned the most," said the chief operating officer of the Savannah Economic Development Authority and vice president of the World Trade Center Savannah.

One of the things Grant learned was that she is passionate about improving her community, something she works toward everyday in economic development.

Kathy Love could identify.

"At 26, I found myself divorced with two children, no job and no education," she said. "I knew I had to support those children and I knew I couldn't do it without an education."

"I didn't know how I was going to do, I just knew I had to."

That was a few degrees ago — a Bachelor of Science in computer science, a master's in business administration, a specialist's in education leadership and a doctorate in education.

Today, Love is president of Savannah Technical College, widely credited with taking the school through a period of rapid growth and solidifying ties with area business and industry.

Living the Golden Rule

Judge Louisa Abbot, who has served on the bench of Chatham County Superior Court since October 2000, learned her
leadership lessons early.

"I think I was 13 when my mother said, 'Sweetie, find something you love to do and never depend on a man to support you.' I took those words to heart and never looked back," she said.

A graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law, Abbot is currently president of the Council of Superior Court Judges. She is a graduate of Leadership Georgia and was the first woman president of the Rotary Club of Savannah.

When panel moderator Mary Anne Hogan, principal of St. Vincent's Academy, asked the group what inspires them every day to raise the bar, Abbot quickly referred to a Golden Rule plaque that sits on her desk.

"Every person, no matter why they are in front of me, is entitled to be treated with respect," she said. "It would be so easy to become coldhearted and cynical in my job, so I try every day to treat people the way they would want to be treated."

Jackson said her inspiration comes from the people she serves.

"It's not always easy to know if you're going in the right direction, but I get lots of feedback," the mayor said, laughing. "And I have friends who tell me what I need to hear, not what I want to hear.

"I like to think I might be making a difference, and that's inspiration enough for me."

Chatman doesn't have to look far for her inspiration.

"At Memorial, we have a team of 4,000 people who — in the midst of challenges — are doing the right things for the right reasons," she said. "And that means people are leaving our hospital to see another sunset with their families."

Grant's inspiration just comes naturally.

"I'm an idealist," she said. "I truly believe we can achieve our goals, I truly believe we can attract that industry or help that local company. I truly believe we can be the best city in the world."

"It's sometimes my greatest strength and sometimes it comes back to kick me, but it's just who I am."

The brainchild of legacy council chairwoman Connie Farmer Ray, Tuesday's luncheon and panel is already slated to become an annual event, according to United Way spokeswoman Lisa Clark.

Proceeds from this year's event will be used to provide CAT bus passes and transportation assistance for low-income women who do not have a car or other means to access services in the community.

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The United Way Women's Legacy Council was founded to mobilize women to become powerful philanthropists through leadership, fundraising and advocacy. By leveraging skills, relationships and resources in support of the United Way of the Coastal Empire, they make a profound difference in the lives of women, said legacy council chair Connie Farmer Ray.
The University of Georgia issued the following news release:

Stefanie A. Lindquist, an associate dean at the University of Texas at Austin and a scholar who works at the interface of law and politics, has been named dean of the University of Georgia School of Public and International Affairs.

Lindquist, who began her academic career nearly 20 years ago at UGA, is the Charles Alan Wright Chair in Federal Courts and associate dean for external affairs at the University of Texas School of Law.

The appointment was announced by Jere Morehead, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. The deans of the 17 schools and colleges at UGA report to the provost.

"I am very pleased that Dr. Lindquist is returning to UGA as dean of the School of Public and International Affairs," said UGA President Michael F. Adams. "She is widely regarded as one of the bright young faculty stars in her field, and knows both SPIA and UGA deeply and well. She will be a strong addition to our very good leadership team."

The search committee was chaired by Rebecca White, dean of the UGA School of Law, and assisted by the UGA Search Group in Human Resources. Lindquist's appointment is effective Aug. 1.

"Dr. Lindquist's record of outstanding leadership in a variety of roles, including serving as an interim dean at the University of Texas, and her ability to garner support from alumni and other donors make her ideally suited to lead our nationally prominent School of Public and International Affairs," Morehead said. "Her scholarship and teaching have been repeatedly recognized for excellence, and I am confident that she will enhance the exemplary programs of research and teaching that the school offers."

As associate dean for external affairs for the University of Texas School of Law, Lindquist is engaged in fundraising and alumni relations for a law school that is ranked fourth among public universities and 15th among all U.S. law schools by
News and World Report. Her research focuses on judicial behavior in the federal and state appellate courts, and she holds a courtesy appointment in the department of government. She joined the UT Austin School of Law in 2008 and also has served as its interim dean and associate dean for academic affairs.

She is the author or co-author of more than 50 journal articles, book chapters, essays and legal notes, as well as two books. In "Measuring Judicial Activism" (Oxford University Press, 2009) she and co-author Frank Cross identified objective, empirical measures of judicial activism on the United States Supreme Court. In her 2006 book, "Judging on a Collegial Court: Influences on Appellate Court Decision Making" (University of Virginia Press), Lindquist and her co-authors evaluated factors that influenced circuit court judges' decisions to dissent, concur and reverse the lower court.

Prior to joining the UT Austin School of Law, she was an associate professor of political science and law at Vanderbilt University, with a primary appointment in the department of political science. She started her academic career at UGA in 1996, joining the department of political science as well as the department of public administration and policy, with an adjunct appointment in the School of Law. She was named associate professor at UGA in 2003.

Lindquist was a 2002 recipient of the Richard B. Russell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, UGA's highest early career teaching honor. She also received the J. Hatten Howard Teaching Award from the UGA Honors Program and was recognized for excellence in teaching by the graduate student organization in the department of public administration and by the Student Government Organization. She was a participant in the Lilly Teaching Fellows program, which provides opportunities for faculty to further develop their teaching skills, from 2000 to 2001, and later served as co-director of the program. She also coached the UGA Mock Trial Team, was a faculty mentor in the Honors Program and faculty adviser to the Demosthenian Literary Society. At Vanderbilt, she received the Robert Birkby Award for Excellence in Teaching Political Science and served as director of the graduate program.

Lindquist was the 2011 recipient of the best conference paper award from the law and courts section of the American Political Science Association, served as chair of the APSA law and courts section from 2008 to 2009 and was the program chair for the section's annual meeting in 2008. She is the recipient of two National Science Foundation grants and served as a panel member at the NSF Law and Social Sciences Division for two years. She has served on the editorial board of the Journal of Politics since 2010 and on the editorial board of the Review of Public Personnel Administration since 2004. She also has served on the editorial board of the Law and Society Review.

Lindquist holds a bachelor's degree from Ursinus College in Pennsylvania and a doctorate from the University of South Carolina with an emphasis in American politics, public law and public administration. She earned her J.D. from Temple University in Philadelphia, where she served as editor in chief of the Temple Law Review.

Following law school, she clerked for the Honorable Anthony J. Scirica at the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia and practiced law at Latham and Watkins in Washington, D.C. She also worked for one year as a research associate at the Federal Judicial Center in Washington D.C. assisting committees of the Federal Judicial Conference in addressing questions of judicial administration.

"I am deeply honored to have the opportunity to lead SPIA-a school that over its 12-year history has already distinguished itself as among the most prominent public affairs schools in the nation," Lindquist said. "Under the able leadership of its inaugural dean, Tom Lauth, and through the efforts of its dedicated faculty, students, and staff, SPIA has established an impressive set of educational programs and initiatives that enhance student learning and civic engagement, and that deepen our understanding of governance and democracy. I look forward to building on these strengths and promoting SPIA's important mission both here and abroad."

The UGA School of Public and International Affairs prepares undergraduate students for good citizenship and careers in public life and trains future generations of teachers and scholars in the fields of international affairs, political science and public administration and policy. The school currently is ranked by U.S. News & World Report as the nation's fourth best public affairs graduate school. For more information about the school, see http://spia.uga.edu/.
MARIE ANA - The phone has been ringing in suite 106 at 166 Anderson St. as Rob Teilhet has opened a new law practice a block off the Square.

Teilhet is a former state legislator who now represents victims of personal injury and handles family law issues.

Although Teilhet was previously with a local firm, it has been a couple of years since he practiced law. Teilhet said he was originally concerned about getting referrals, but has been given a great reception in Marietta.

Teilhet said most of his cases have an element of physical or emotional pain. He added the Teilhet Firm is focused on everyday people in need of help.

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Teilhet said running his own practice gives him the chance to develop a relationship with a person having a rough time.

For instance, Teilhet, 39, met with a lady in Douglasville last week.

"I sat in the Applebee's and talked to her a long time about what her options were," Teilhet said.

Teilhet does admit there is a large amount of pressure when fighting for personal issues. He said unlike representing a giant company that will continue to exist no matter the ruling, it can devastate a life if he loses.

Mostly, Teilhet said civil court is about fixing a problem, which often takes finding a middle ground between two parties. He said that his clients recognize his best attempts at giving them a voice.

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One of the side benefits of this, he said, is he gets to see all the historic courthouses around the state.

Swimming against
the political tide

Teilhet's love of Georgia, past and present, is evident by his professional history in politics.

As a Democrat, Teilhet represented Smyrna in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2003 to 2010.

At the beginning of his first term, the Democrats controlled the state Legislature. Teilhet said he expected to be joining a majority party where "others had blazed the path."

Instead, that time was a period of transition when Republicans took over after the 2004 election.

"I had a different career than I anticipated," Teilhet said. "I thought I would retire an old gray man with a whole list of things that I did."

Instead, Teilhet said his role in the minority was to make symbolic arguments to the public.

"You have to choose your spots. You aren't going to have as many opportunities to pass a law and see it signed into a bill," Teilhet said.

Then, at 36 years old, Teilhet ran in the 2010 primary for state attorney general, but lost what he said was a once-in-a-life-time opportunity he had to take.

After that election, Teilhet was appointed executive director of the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council. His time leading a state agency was cut short when Gov. Nathan Deal selected a different man.

Teilhet said Cobb County, like the rest of the state and nation, has become more polarized.

"You don't see a lot of that crossover type of appeal of many candidates anymore," Teilhet said.

For the last two years, Teilhet has led Georgia Conservation Voters, an environmental nonprofit advocacy group.

"I think there are values that are related to environmental protection that are universal, that are not really subject to partisan back and forth," said Teilhet. "But, the fact that the General Assembly is as Republican as it is, makes running an environmental organization more difficult."

Unlike the policy-making years, Teilhet's role at the advocacy group was meant to be short-term with specific goals.
Teilhet was a fixer. His job was to restore financial stability and strategically place Georgia Conservation Voters as "the voice of the environmental movement in Georgia for many years to come," Teilhet said.

Teaching law at UGA

After a decade trying to frame Georgia laws, Teilhet is now framing young lawyer minds.

As an instructor at the University of Georgia Law School, his most recent class was on election law.

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Preserving family time

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His Twitter profile uses the phrase "recovering politician." And, Teilhet said, he is proud of his public service career, and has nothing left to prove.

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U.S. District Judge Lisa Godbey Wood is usually the only one in the room in a black robe.

That won't be the case Saturday when she stands before the 450 similarly robed graduates from College of Coastal Georgia at the Jekyll Island Convention Center and delivers a commencement address that Woods said she hopes will inspire.

"What would graduation be without some attempt to inspire?" the chief judge of the Southern District of Georgia said this week. "I hope I'll inspire them to recognize their own gifts and to recognize all the many opportunities to use those gifts to help people around them."

It is not her first time standing before a graduating class. She has delivered commencement addresses at Frederica Academy on St. Simons Island, Savannah Country Day and, about three years ago, at the University of Georgia School of Law.

"That was an honor, to speak at my own law school alma mater," she said.

After changing its mission to a four-year college four years ago, the college is running out of firsts since it began adding baccalaureate degrees. For example, the college will confer its first four-year degrees in biological science, health informatics and psychology.

During the past four years, the college built its first student housing, put its first women's basketball team and golf teams into competition and opened food services.

The college didn't keep all its firsts on campus. The 2012 commencement was the first event in the brand-new Jekyll Island Convention Center. College President Valerie Hepburn said then that graduation would not return to the college's noisy old gym.

This is the first group of graduates that includes students who started the new College of Coastal Georgia as freshmen, Hepburn said.

"This could be the last first," she said.

Among the 450 graduates are 170 students receiving baccalaureate degrees, up from 60 in May 2011, Hepburn said.

"That's a pretty good increase," she said.

Also there will be about 50 more total graduates than last year, and there are a good number who are going to graduate school.
"They are academically and emotionally prepared to compete at the graduate schools," Hepburn said.

But there is also one last. It will be Hepburn's final graduation at the school.

She is leaving in June after a few more dedications of what will be campus landmarks.

Wood said that's the only sad part of what will be an otherwise joyous ceremony.

Terry Dickson: (912) 264-0405

LOAD-DATE: May 23, 2013
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"The same thing that drove me in politics is the same thing that drives me in law practice," Teilhet said.
Ryan Wheeler, graduating from law school in Atlanta this month, needs a job. Clay County, a rural southwest Georgia community without a full-time, private-practice attorney, needs all the legal help it can get.

A match made in heaven? Hardly. Despite the job-search difficulty facing the newly minted graduates of Georgia State, Emory, the University of Georgia, Mercer and other law schools, few will end up practicing in rural Georgia, where legal representation is sorely lacking. New lawyers - saddled sometimes with $100,000 in student debt - can't afford to practice where people can't afford to pay them. Plus, the rural lifestyle doesn't always appeal to urban-bred attorneys.

While the poor across Georgia struggle to get legal help, the challenges are amplified in rural areas with greater poverty and higher unemployment rates. And, unlike in metro Atlanta, rural Georgians may have to travel upwards of 50 miles to find an attorney.

State, federal and bar association officials talk periodically about ways to boost rural legal representation. They eye subsidies and loan-forgiveness programs that have increased the number of doctors practicing in rural areas.

Money, though, particularly with post-recession austerity, is hard to come by. A half-dozen Georgia counties have no private-practice lawyers, according to the State Bar of Georgia. Another five counties tally only one. Meanwhile, 81 percent of the state's 15,000 lawyers work in metro Atlanta, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports, where slightly more than half of the state's population resides.

By law, criminal defendants who are poor must be represented. But thousands of Georgians who need help with divorce, Medicaid eligibility, collections fraud, child custody or other civil cases can't afford legal representation. Some get free help from the Georgia Legal Services Program, a nonprofit offering aid outside Atlanta.

"There is such an inability to help people so in need of legal services. It's frustrating," said Cheryl Griffin, a circuit-riding Legal Services attorney in Albany whose caseload has doubled the last five years. "It leads to a legal system where people feel they don't have a voice."

Wheeler, who's on track to graduate May 17 from Georgia State University with $40,000 in law school debt, can't envision practicing in a place like Fort Gaines, which has no traffic light or fast-food restaurant.

"It's not that it's less worthy. It just doesn't jive with my personality," he said.

'Real grim out there'

Wheeler, 33, is well aware, though, of the employment challenges that await new lawyers. One of every three 2012 Georgia graduates who passed the state bar exam hasn't found full-time work, according to the American Bar Association. While job prospects increased slightly from the previous year, the overall unemployment rate for Georgia attorneys - 11.5 percent - is well above the overall state rate.

Emory University, with 73 percent of its 2012 law grads fully employed as lawyers, topped the Georgia placement list. At UGA, 69 percent of grads had jobs. About two-thirds of Georgia State grads were employed too, the ABA reported.
"It's real grim out there," said Wheeler, who'd like to open a solo practice in Atlanta handling personal-injury, DUI and landlord-tenant disputes. "I don't have anything lined up."

The recession hammered the legal profession. Firms cut back hiring and laid off attorneys. Or they outsourced legal research and document preparation to non-lawyers. Online, do-it-yourself legal forms further eroded attorney employment.

"The market has been tough since 2008 for law school grads," said David O'Brien, director of legal career services at the UGA School of Law. "But there is still a lot of need for legal representation. Whether the market can support paying for lawyers is a different question."

In Clay, 36 percent of residents live below the federal poverty line of $23,550 for a family of four. The school system is the county's largest employer. Many residents cross the Chattahoochee River into Alabama to work at a chicken plant 45 minutes away.

Only 3,156 people live in Clay, 175 miles south of Atlanta, and the population is declining. Even if they could afford a lawyer, the pickings are slim. Terry Marlowe opens the only Fort Gaines law office just one day a week.

"It's a very limited market," said Marlowe, who works most days in Albany, 75 miles away. "People there just don't have a lot of money. If somebody is looking to go to a rural area like Fort Gaines and make a really good living, well, that's not going to happen."

Griffin visits Fort Gaines on the first Wednesday of every month. She handles 50 to 60 cases at a time across nine counties.

Her clients, including Lem Battle, pay nothing. Battle, 48 and jobless, needed a divorce. Griffin helped him get one a year ago with a restraining order against his wife and without alimony payments.

Battle, with Griffin by his side at the Clay County Public Library, said, "She's like an angel to me, like my guardian angel."

$41K vs. $145K

Most law school grads don't go into public-interest law, like Legal Services, and most don't go into rural America. Albany, Bainbridge, Valdosta and Waycross, for example, count only one UGA 2012 law school grad. About 105 of UGA's 229 graduates from last year work in metro Atlanta.

"I wouldn't envision that very many people from large, suburban towns would be interested in going to rural areas where they have no family connections or footholds to get a law firm started," said Henry Balkcom, the newly elected probate judge in Quitman County who left an Atlanta law firm in 2006 to return home to Georgetown. "I'm sure that some lawyers would forgo a high-dollar career for work like Ms. Griffin's, but not many."

Legal Services attorneys start at around $41,000 a year in salary and get some loan-forgiveness assistance. The annual mean wage for an Atlanta attorney last year was $145,010, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Nationwide, though, the median starting salary for lawyers continues to decline from $72,000 in 2009 to $60,000 in 2012.

"If it were not for my loans I would love to be a rural practitioner," said GSU's Josh Ryden, a Newnan resident who will graduate next year with more than $100,000 in grad and undergrad debt.

The federal government subsidizes doctors, nurses and dentists to work in underserved communities. Could a similar program work for lawyers? South Dakota, for example, will soon start a pilot program to subsidize 16 lawyers with $12,000 a year provided they stick around for five years.

In Georgia, though, there's little talk of additional government or bar association assistance for rural lawyers. Superior Court Judge Joe Bishop has asked the General Assembly for money to hire part-time legal help for people who can't afford an attorney and try to represent themselves. No luck.

"When you talk about people being represented in a civil case by a lawyer, or putting a doctor on the ground to look after sick babies, the politics are such that it would be difficult to do," said Bishop, who circuit-rides a seven-county region of Southwest Georgia.

Law schools make varying efforts to steer grads to rural areas. At UGA, for example, the Rural South Law Society connects students with rural lawyers and politicians who encourage grads to consider underserved areas.
For the most part, though, the rural poor get by with pro-bono legal assistance, do-it-yourself kits or the likes of Cheryl Griffin, who started her Wednesday in Quitman County with a grandmother seeking legal custody of a granddaughter. At the library - a non-threatening environment that attracts clients - Griffin unspooled a litany of her cases that might have ended badly without access to an attorney: the mother of two kids seeking a divorce from an abusive husband; the elderly, little-educated lady threatened by a collection agency; and the Medicaid recipient wrongly evicted from a nursing home.
"It's never a dull moment," Griffin said.
NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet set Saturday

Staff report
CNHI

THOMASVILLE — The Thomas County Branch NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet will be held at the Thomasville High School Cafeteria Saturday. This year's theme is "Let Justice Ring."

The speaker is Thomasville native Stephanie Brunner Tillman, a 1988 honor graduate of Thomasville High School. The attorney and author is currently the Corporate Compliance officer for Flowers Foods Inc. and holds the position of vice president of compliance and assistant general counsel.

Tillman is the author of From My Heart To Yours . . . Letters To My Young Sisters, which is a collection of letters to pre-teen and teen girls written to encourage them to value themselves, make good choices and plan for their futures.

A leader and a mentor, Tillman participates in many community organizations and has been recognized for her diligence and excellence. She is a member of the Rose City Church of Christ where she is active with the youth ministry and is also the president of the Lambda Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Tillman earned a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Georgia and a juris doctor from the University of Georgia School of Law. She also has a master of business administration degree from Thomas University.

She is married to Ben Tillman Jr. and has two children, Trey and Lindsay.

Tickets may be purchased at the door for $30 each.
When Museums Do the Right Thing

By MARK V. VLASIC and TESS DAVIS

STONES and bones rarely make the front page, and even less frequently in the same month, but this has been no ordinary month. And it's not over yet.

On May 4, The New York Times announced that the Metropolitan Museum of Art would voluntarily repatriate twin 10th century statues to Cambodia, after the museum received "dispositive" evidence that the pieces were products of the illicit antiquities trade.

A few miles away and a few days later, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security celebrated the not-so-voluntary repatriation of a looted 70-million-year-old Tyrannosaurus bataar (a relative of Tyrannosaurus rex) to Mongolia, having seized it from a self-described "commercial paleontologist" (and now confessed smuggler) named Eric Prokopi. Taken from the Gobi Desert, the dinosaur bones were seized last year after Prokopi tried to sell them in violation of U.S. and Mongolian law.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Cambodia publicly called upon other American museums to examine their Khmer collections and return any pieces that were plundered after the start of the country's civil war in 1970.

With these two high-profile returns, attention may turn to Sotheby's auction house next. The historic institution is fighting in New York courts to hawk a Cambodian sculpture that — along with the Met's pair — once formed a three-dimensional tableau at the ancient temple of Koh Ker. These stone figures remained in situ for a millennium, until the country descended into war against the Khmer Rouge, when they were allegedly looted and trafficked overseas. Having traveled around the world through illicit and licit markets, the statues finally resurfaced in Manhattan.

In 2011, the Cambodian government asked Sotheby's to return the piece in its possession, and enlisted the help of the U.S. government when the auction house declined. As a result, Sotheby's now finds itself in the sights of the very federal agents and attorneys who so successfully investigated and prosecuted the T. bataar case.

Of course, Sotheby's may still follow the Met's lead, decide that its reputation is more important than a high-end sculpture, and repatriate the contested piece. But at the least, this month's headlines offer a lesson. In both the Met and T. bataar cases, the looted items are
going home. While the press and public are now honoring the museum, Prokopi is facing years in prison and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines.

Of course, the return of treasures like these to Phnom Penh and Ulan Bator are still the exception, but they are growing as governments, law enforcement agencies and the public increasingly realize that looting cultural treasures is a crime — and not a victimless one. Just last year, the Dallas Museum of Art returned to Turkey a 194 A.D. mosaic, “Orpheus Taming Wild Animals,” which was likely looted from the floor of a Roman building in the southeastern part of the country.

But even as these returns are being made, looters are devastating ancient sites in search of prized artifacts to sell on the international market. To underscore the point, the very week that one of us visited the ancient Roman cities of Leptis Magna and Sabratha in Libya, we heard about the looting of a “heavyweight” statue in the middle of the night.

The smuggling of stolen cultural objects has become an underground industry that spans the globe. Though the F.B.I. estimates that the value of this black market is as much as $6 billion a year, we do not really know the actual extent of the trade in illicitly obtained antiquities. (Researchers at the University of Glasgow have received a $1.5 million grant from the European Research Council to attempt to quantify and qualify it.) Nevertheless, if looting on the current scale continues, by the time we have accurate numbers there will be much less of our world heritage to protect. This will not only be a loss for culture and science — there are additional if not readily apparent side effects. The black market in antiquities has been reported as a source of income for organized crime, rebel fighters and even terrorist groups.

The U.S. government, and specifically the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security, should be commended for treating the illicit trade in cultural objects like the crime that it is, protecting the past, and improving America’s international relationships in the process.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York should likewise be praised for refusing to hold on to looted antiquities. Unlike Prokopi, museum authorities did not wait for a court order or lawsuit to return stolen property, thereby demonstrating that it is never too early to do the right thing. In light of this month’s news, it is hoped that Sotheby’s and others will realize that it’s never too late, either. As Edmund Burke said, “All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.”

Mark V. Vlasic, a senior fellow and adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University, served as the first head of operations of the World Bank’s Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative and leads the international practice at Madison Law & Strategy Group. Tess Davis, a
researcher at the University of Glasgow, served as the executive director of the Lawyers' Committee for Cultural Heritage Preservation, and is working with Cambodia to combat the illicit trade in the kingdom's antiquities.
U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Beverly Martin to deliver law school Commencement address

UGA News Service | Posted: Friday, May 17, 2013 9:47 am

On May 18, **Judge Beverly B. Martin** of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit will serve as the keynote speaker at the University of Georgia School of Law’s graduation.

Approximately 230 law students will receive their juris doctor, while six master of laws candidates will be recognized for completing one year of graduate legal study.

The processional will begin at 10 a.m. on the quadrangle in front of the law school on UGA’s North Campus. In the event of rain, the ceremony will be moved to Stegeman Coliseum.

**A 1981 Georgia Law alumna,** Martin was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 2010 to her current seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals. Previously, she served for nearly a decade as a U.S. District Court judge for the Northern District of Georgia. Martin worked as a U.S. attorney and assistant U.S. attorney in the Middle District of Georgia from 1994 to 2000 and represented the state of Georgia as an assistant attorney general in various litigation matters from 1984 to 1994. She also practiced at the firm Martin & Snow in Macon after graduating from law school.

Martin earned her bachelor’s degree from Stetson University in 1976 before coming to Athens to pursue her law degree at UGA.
The Sun Herald

Unemployment falls in 40 US states, rises in 3

PERSONNEL FILE for May 19

Published: May 18, 2013

Keesler Federal Credit Union announces its 2013-14 Board of Directors: James Hollingsworth, chairman; Jerry Caldwell, vice chairman; Adrien Augustine, treasurer; Jamie Perronne, secretary; Cynthia Payne Childers, member; Richard Moss, member; Jon Rivera, member; and Josie King, associate board member. Appointed to the Supervisory Committee: Bobby Landry, chairman; and members Mike Ladner, Allan Micksch, Josie King and Gregory Todd.

Fisher & Phillips LLP announces the addition of two attorneys in Gulfport. Steven Cupp, a partner, is joined by Jaklyn L. Wrigley, an associate. Cupp has focused his practice on management-side labor and employment law for 23 years. He is licensed to practice in Mississippi, Louisiana and Georgia. He earned his juris doctor degree, cum laude, at the University of Georgia School of Law in 1990 and his bachelor of arts at the University of New Orleans. Wrigley practices labor and employment law and is admitted to practice in Mississippi, Missouri and the District of Columbia. She earned her law degree, magna cum laude, from the University of Mississippi School of Law and her bachelor of arts from the University of Missouri’s Honor College.

Memorial Physician Clinics announces Dr. Theresa Freeman will staff the Memorial Walk-In Clinic at 1756 Popp’s Ferry Road, Biloxi. Freeman is a graduate of the University of Georgia. She received her doctor of osteopathic medicine and master's in public health at Nova Southeastern University, College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. She completed her general surgery internship at the University of California at Davis, Sacramento, and her second-year general surgery residency at Keesler Air Force Base.

Amy Wood, broker/owner of Amy Wood Properties LLC, was honored with the Emerald Award at the Gulf Coast Association of Realtors Top Producer banquet. The award is the highest residential award for the top production in 2012. Wood specializes in various types of real estate.

Jessica Cruthirds has been named as Civilian of the First Quarter at the Naval Oceanographic Office. Cruthirds is a native of Ocean Springs and serves as a management support specialist for the Command Services Department. She is being recognized for her outstanding administrative and manpower support
during the absence of the NAVOCEANO manpower manager, while also maintaining her day-to-day duties.

Nancy Bennett and Brenda Toepfer were recognized as South Mississippi Regional Center's Spring Employees of the Quarter. Bennett works at Biloxi Community Homes as a direct care worker. Toepfer has been the administrative assistant in the Dietetic & Nutrition department on the Long Beach campus for 18 years.

Samantha Burch McGill has joined the Diabetes Center, PLLC as a family nurse practitioner. McGill is a graduate of The University of Southern Mississippi.
OBAMA: Hello, Morehouse! (Applause.) Thank you, everybody. Please be seated.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I love you!

OBAMA: I love you back. (Laughter.) That is why I am here.

I have to say that it is one of the great honors of my life to be able to address this gathering here today. I want to thank Dr. Wilson for his outstanding leadership, and the Board of Trustees. We have Congressman Cedric Richmond and Sanford Bishop -- both proud alumni of this school, as well as Congressman Hank Johnson. And one of my dear friends and a great inspiration to us all -- the great John Lewis is here. (Applause.) We have your outstanding
Mayor, Mr. Kasim Reed, in the house. (Applause.)

To all the members of the Morehouse family. And most of all, congratulations to this distinguished group of Morehouse Men -- the Class of 2013. (Applause.)

I have to say that it's a little hard to follow -- not Dr. Wilson, but a skinny guy with a funny name. (Laughter.) Betsegaw Tadele -- he's going to be doing something.

I also have to say that you all are going to get wet. (Laughter.) And I'd be out there with you if I could. (Laughter.) But Secret Service gets nervous. (Laughter.) So I'm going to have to stay here, dry. (Laughter.) But know that I'm there with you in spirit. (Laughter.)

Some of you are graduating summa cum laude. (Applause.) Some of you are graduating magna cum laude. (Applause.) I know some of you are just graduating, "thank you, Lordy." (Laughter and applause.) That's appropriate because it's a Sunday. (Laughter.)

I see some moms and grandmas here, aunts, in their Sunday best -- although they are upset about their hair getting messed up. (Laughter.) Michelle would not be sitting in the rain. (Laughter.) She has taught me about hair. (Laughter.)

I want to congratulate all of you -- the parents, the grandparents, the brothers and sisters, the family and friends who supported these young men in so many ways. This is your day, as well. Just think about it -- your sons, your brothers, your nephews -- they spent the last four years far from home and close to Spelman, and yet they are still here today. (Applause.) So you've done something right. Graduates, give a big round of applause to your family for everything that they've done for you. (Applause.)

I know that some of you had to wait in long lines to get into today's ceremony. And I would apologize, but it did not have anything to do with security. Those graduates just wanted you to know what it's like to register for classes here. (Laughter and applause.) And this time of year brings a different kind of stress -- every senior stopping by Gloster Hall over the past week making sure your name was actually on the list of students who met all the graduation requirements. (Applause.) If it wasn't on the list, you had to figure out why. Was it that library book you lent to that trifling roommate who didn't return it? (Laughter.) Was it Dr. Johnson's policy class? (Applause.) Did you get enough Crown Forum credits? (Applause.)

On that last point, I'm going to exercise my power as President to declare this speech sufficient Crown Forum credits for any otherwise eligible student to graduate. That is my graduation gift to you. (Applause.) You have a special dispensation.

Now, graduates, I am humbled to stand here with all of you as an honorary Morehouse Man. (Applause.) I finally made it. (Laughter.) And as I do, I'm mindful of an old saying: "You can always tell a Morehouse Man --
Benjamin Mays, who served as the president of Morehouse for almost 30 years, understood that tradition better than anybody. He said -- and I quote -- "It will not be sufficient for Morehouse College, for any college, for that matter, to produce clever graduates... but rather honest men, men who can be trusted in public and private life -- men who are sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society and who are willing to accept responsibility for correcting [those] ills."

It was that mission -- not just to educate men, but to cultivate good men, strong men, upright men -- that brought community leaders together just two years after the end of the Civil War. They assembled a list of 37 men, free blacks and freed slaves, who would make up the first prospective class of what later became Morehouse College. Most of those first students had a desire to become teachers and preachers -- to better themselves so they could help others do the same.

A century and a half later, times have changed. But the "Morehouse Mystique" still endures. Some of you probably came here from communities where everybody looked like you. Others may have come here in search of a community. And I suspect that some of you probably felt a little bit of culture shock the first time you came together as a class in King's Chapel. All of a sudden, you weren't the only high school sports captain, you weren't the only student council president. You were suddenly in a group of high achievers, and that meant you were expected to do something more.

That's the unique sense of purpose that this place has always infused -- the conviction that this is a training ground not only for individual success, but for leadership that can change the world.

Dr. King was just 15 years old when he enrolled here at Morehouse. He was an unknown, undersized, unassuming young freshman who lived at home with his parents. And I think it's fair to say he wasn't the coolest kid on campus -- for the suits he wore, his classmates called him "Tweed." But his education at Morehouse helped to forge the intellect, the discipline, the compassion, the soul force that would transform America. It was here that he was introduced to the writings of Gandhi and Thoreau, and the theory of civil disobedience. It was here that professors encouraged him to look past the world as it was and fight for the world as it should be. And it was here, at Morehouse, as Dr. King later wrote, where "I realized that nobody...was afraid."

Not even of some bad weather. I added on that part. (Laughter.) I know it's wet out there. But Dr. Wilson told me you all had a choice and decided to do it out here anyway. (Applause.) That's a Morehouse Man talking.

Now, think about it. For black men in the '40s and the '50s, the threat of violence, the constant humiliations, large and small, the uncertainty that you could support a family, the gnawing doubts born of the Jim Crow culture that told you every day that somehow you were inferior, the temptation to shrink
from the world, to accept your place, to avoid risks, to be afraid -- that temptation was necessarily strong.

And yet, here, under the tutelage of men like Dr. Mays, young Martin learned to be unafraid. And he, in turn, taught others to be unafraid. And over time, he taught a nation to be unafraid. And over the last 50 years, thanks to the moral force of Dr. King and a Moses generation that overcame their fear and their cynicism and their despair, barriers have come tumbling down, and new doors of opportunity have swung open, and laws and hearts and minds have been changed to the point where someone who looks just like you can somehow come to serve as President of these United States of America. (Applause.)

So the history we share should give you hope. The future we share should give you hope. You're graduating into an improving job market. You're living in a time when advances in technology and communication put the world at your fingertips. Your generation is uniquely poised for success unlike any generation of African Americans that came before it.

But that doesn't mean we don't have work -- because if we're honest with ourselves, we know that too few of our brothers have the opportunities that you've had here at Morehouse. In troubled neighborhoods all across this country -- many of them heavily African American -- too few of our citizens have role models to guide them. Communities just a couple miles from my house in Chicago, communities just a couple miles from here -- they're places where jobs are still too scarce and wages are still too low; where schools are underfunded and violence is pervasive; where too many of our men spend their youth not behind a desk in a classroom, but hanging out on the streets or brooding behind a jail cell.

My job, as President, is to advocate for policies that generate more opportunity for everybody -- policies that strengthen the middle class and give more people the chance to climb their way into the middle class. Policies that create more good jobs and reduce poverty, and educate more children, and give more families the security of health care, and protect more of our children from the horrors of gun violence. That's my job. Those are matters of public policy, and it is important for all of us -- black, white and brown -- to advocate for an America where everybody has got a fair shot in life. Not just some. Not just a few. (Applause.)

But along with collective responsibilities, we have individual responsibilities. There are some things, as black men, we can only do for ourselves. There are some things, as Morehouse Men, that you are obliged to do for those still left behind. As Morehouse Men, you now wield something even more powerful than the diploma you're about to collect -- and that's the power of your example.

So what I ask of you today is the same thing I ask of every graduating class I address: Use that power for something larger than yourself. Live up to President Mays's challenge. Be "sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society." And be "willing to accept responsibility for correcting [those] ills."
I know that some of you came to Morehouse from communities where life was about keeping your head down and looking out for yourself. Maybe you feel like you escaped, and now you can take your degree and get that fancy job and the nice house and the nice car -- and never look back. And don't get me wrong -- with all those student loans you've had to take out, I know you've got to earn some money. With doors open to you that your parents and grandparents could not even imagine, no one expects you to take a vow of poverty. But I will say it betrays a poverty of ambition if all you think about is what goods you can buy instead of what good you can do. (Applause.)

So, yes, go get that law degree. But if you do, ask yourself if the only option is to defend the rich and the powerful, or if you can also find some time to defend the powerless. Sure, go get your MBA, or start that business. We need black businesses out there. But ask yourselves what broader purpose your business might serve, in putting people to work, or transforming a neighborhood. The most successful CEOs I know didn't start out intent just on making money -- rather, they had a vision of how their product or service would change things, and the money followed. (Applause.)

Some of you may be headed to medical school to become doctors. But make sure you heal folks in underserved communities who really need it, too. For generations, certain groups in this country -- especially African Americans -- have been desperate in need of access to quality, affordable health care. And as a society, we're finally beginning to change that. Those of you who are under the age of 26 already have the option to stay on your parent's health care plan. But all of you are heading into an economy where many young people expect not only to have multiple jobs, but multiple careers.

So starting October 1st, because of the Affordable Care Act -- otherwise known as Obamacare -- (applause) -- you'll be able to shop for a quality, affordable plan that's yours and travels with you -- a plan that will insure not only your health, but your dreams if you are sick or get in an accident. But we're going to need some doctors to make sure it works, too. We've got to make sure everybody has good health in this country. It's not just good for you, it's good for this country. So you're going to have to spread the word to your fellow young people.

Which brings me to a second point: Just as Morehouse has taught you to expect more of yourselves, inspire those who look up to you to expect more of themselves. We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices. And I have to say, growing up, I made quite a few myself. Sometimes I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a black man down. I had a tendency sometimes to make excuses for me not doing the right thing. But one of the things that all of you have learned over the last four years is there's no longer any room for excuses. (Applause.)

I understand there's a common fraternity creed here at Morehouse: "Excuses are tools of the incompetent used to build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothingness." Well, we've got no time for excuses. Not because the bitter legacy of slavery and segregation have vanished entirely; they have not. Not because racism and discrimination no longer exist; we know those are still
out there. It's just that in today's hyperconnected, hypercompetitive world, with millions of young people from China and India and Brazil -- many of whom started with a whole lot less than all of you did -- all of them entering the global workforce alongside you, nobody is going to give you anything that you have not earned. (Applause.)

Nobody cares how tough your upbringing was. Nobody cares if you suffered some discrimination. And moreover, you have to remember that whatever you've gone through, it pales in comparison to the hardships previous generations endured -- and they overcame them. And if they overcame them, you can overcome them, too. (Applause.)

You now hail from a lineage and legacy of immeasurably strong men -- men who bore tremendous burdens and still laid the stones for the path on which we now walk. You wear the mantle of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, and Ralph Bunche and Langston Hughes, and George Washington Carver and Ralph Abernathy and Thurgood Marshall, and, yes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These men were many things to many people. And they knew full well the role that racism played in their lives. But when it came to their own accomplishments and sense of purpose, they had no time for excuses.

Every one of you have a grandma or an uncle or a parent who's told you that at some point in life, as an African American, you have to work twice as hard as anyone else if you want to get by. I think President Mays put it even better: He said, "Whatever you do, strive to do it so well that no man living and no man dead, and no man yet to be born can do it any better." (Applause.)

And I promise you, what was needed in Dr. Mays's time, that spirit of excellence, and hard work, and dedication, and no excuses is needed now more than ever. If you think you can just get over in this economy just because you have a Morehouse degree, you're in for a rude awakening. But if you stay hungry, if you keep hustling, if you keep on your grind and get other folks to do the same -- nobody can stop you. (Applause.)

And when I talk about pursuing excellence and setting an example, I'm not just talking about in your professional life. One of today's graduates, Frederick Anderson -- where's Frederick? Frederick, right here. (Applause.) I know it's raining, but I'm going to tell about Frederick. Frederick started his college career in Ohio, only to find out that his high school sweetheart back in Georgia was pregnant. So he came back and enrolled in Morehouse to be closer to her. Pretty soon, helping raise a newborn and working night shifts became too much, so he started taking business classes at a technical college instead -- doing everything from delivering newspapers to buffing hospital floors to support his family.

And then he enrolled at Morehouse a second time. But even with a job, he couldn't keep up with the cost of tuition. So after getting his degree from that technical school, this father of three decided to come back to Morehouse for a third time. (Applause.) As Frederick says, "God has a plan for my life, and He's not done with me yet."

And today, Frederick is a family man, and a working man, and a
Morehouse Man. (Applause.) And that's what I'm asking all of you to do: Keep setting an example for what it means to be a man. (Applause.) Be the best husband to your wife, or you're your boyfriend, or your partner. Be the best father you can be to your children. Because nothing is more important.

I was raised by a heroic single mom, wonderful grandparents -- made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you. But I sure wish I had had a father who was not only present, but involved. Didn't know my dad. And so my whole life, I've tried to be for Michelle and my girls what my father was not for my mother and me. I want to break that cycle where a father is not at home -- (applause) -- where a father is not helping to raise that son or daughter. I want to be a better father, a better husband, a better man.

It's hard work that demands your constant attention and frequent sacrifice. And I promise you, Michelle will tell you I'm not perfect. She's got a long list of my imperfections. (Laughter.) Even now, I'm still practicing, I'm still learning, still getting corrected in terms of how to be a fine husband and a good father. But I will tell you this: Everything else is unfulfilled if we fail at family, if we fail at that responsibility. (Applause.)

I know that when I am on my deathbed someday, I will not be thinking about any particular legislation I passed; I will not be thinking about a policy I promoted; I will not be thinking about the speech I gave, I will not be thinking the Nobel Prize I received. I will be thinking about that walk I took with my daughters. I'll be thinking about a lazy afternoon with my wife. I'll be thinking about sitting around the dinner table and seeing them happy and healthy and knowing that they were loved. And I'll be thinking about whether I did right by all of them.

So be a good role model, set a good example for that young brother coming up. If you know somebody who's not on point, go back and bring that brother along -- those who've been left behind, who haven't had the same opportunities we have -- they need to hear from you. You've got to be engaged on the barbershops, on the basketball court, at church, spend time and energy and presence to give people opportunities and a chance. Pull them up, expose them, support their dreams. Don't put them down.

We've got to teach them just like what we have to learn, what it means to be a man -- to serve your city like Maynard Jackson; to shape the culture like Spike Lee; to be like Chester Davenport, one of the first people to integrate the University of Georgia Law School. When he got there, nobody would sit next to him in class. But Chester didn't mind. Later on, he said, "It was the thing for me to do. Someone needed to be the first." And today, Chester is here celebrating his 50th reunion. Where is Chester Davenport? He's here. (Applause.)

So if you've had role models, fathers, brothers like that -- thank them today. And if you haven't, commit yourself to being that man to somebody else.

And finally, as you do these things, do them not just for yourself, but don't even do them just for the African American community. I want you to set
your sights higher. At the turn of the last century, W.E.B. DuBois spoke about the "talented tenth" -- a class of highly educated, socially conscious leaders in the black community. But it's not just the African American community that needs you. The country needs you. The world needs you.

As Morehouse Men, many of you know what it's like to be an outsider; know what it's like to be marginalized; know what it's like to feel the sting of discrimination. And that's an experience that a lot of Americans share. Hispanic Americans know that feeling when somebody asks them where they come from or tell them to go back. Gay and lesbian Americans feel it when a stranger passes judgment on their parenting skills or the love that they share. Muslim Americans feel it when they're stared at with suspicion because of their faith. Any woman who knows the injustice of earning less pay for doing the same work -- she knows what it's like to be on the outside looking in.

So your experiences give you special insight that today's leaders need. If you tap into that experience, it should endow you with empathy -- the understanding of what it's like to walk in somebody else's shoes, to see through their eyes, to know what it's like when you're not born on 3rd base, thinking you hit a triple. It should give you the ability to connect. It should give you a sense of compassion and what it means to overcome barriers.

And I will tell you, Class of 2013, whatever success I have achieved, whatever positions of leadership I have held have depended less on Ivy League degrees or SAT scores or GPAs, and have instead been due to that sense of connection and empathy -- the special obligation I felt, as a black man like you, to help those who need it most, people who didn't have the opportunities that I had -- because there but for the grace of God, go I -- I might have been in their shoes. I might have been in prison. I might have been unemployed. I might not have been able to support a family. And that motivates me. (Applause.)

So it's up to you to widen your circle of concern -- to care about justice for everybody, white, black and brown. Everybody. Not just in your own community, but also across this country and around the world. To make sure everyone has a voice, and everybody gets a seat at the table; that everybody, no matter what you look like or where you come from, what your last name is -- it doesn't matter, everybody gets a chance to walk through those doors of opportunity if they are willing to work hard enough.

When Leland Shelton was four years old -- where's Leland? (Applause.) Stand up, Leland. When Leland Shelton was four years old, social services took him away from his mama, put him in the care of his grandparents. By age 14, he was in the foster care system. Three years after that, Leland enrolled in Morehouse. And today he is graduating Phi Beta Kappa on his way to Harvard Law School. (Applause.) But he's not stopping there. As a member of the National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council, he plans to use his law degree to make sure kids like him don't fall through the cracks. And it won't matter whether they're black kids or brown kids or white kids or Native American kids, because he'll understand what they're going through. And he'll be fighting for them. He'll be in their corner. That's leadership. That's a Morehouse Man right there. (Applause.)
That’s what we’ve come to expect from you, Morehouse -- a legacy of leaders -- not just in our black community, but for the entire American community. To recognize the burdens you carry with you, but to resist the temptation to use them as excuses. To transform the way we think about manhood, and set higher standards for ourselves and for others. To be successful, but also to understand that each of us has responsibilities not just to ourselves, but to one another and to future generations. Men who refuse to be afraid. Men who refuse to be afraid.

Members of the Class of 2013, you are heirs to a great legacy. You have within you that same courage and that same strength, the same resolve as the men who came before you. That’s what being a Morehouse Man is all about. That’s what being an American is all about.

Success may not come quickly or easily. But if you strive to do what’s right, if you work harder and dream bigger, if you set an example in your own lives and do your part to help meet the challenges of our time, then I'm confident that, together, we will continue the never-ending task of perfecting our union.

Public Papers of the Presidents

May 19, 2013 Sunday

LENGTH: 4021 words

HEADLINE: Commencement Address at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia

BODY:

Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

The President. Hello, Morehouse! Well, thank you, everybody. Please be seated.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. [Laughter] That is why I am here.

Now, I have to say that it is one of the great honors of my life to be able to address this gathering here today. I want to thank Dr. Wilson for his outstanding leadership, and the Board of Trustees. We have Congressmen Cedric Richmond and Sanford Bishop, both proud alumni of this school, as well as Congressman Hank Johnson. And one of my dear friends and a great inspiration to us all, the great John Lewis is here. We have your outstanding mayor, Mr. Kasim Reed, in the house.

To all the members of the Morehouse family, and most of all, congratulations to this distinguished group of Morehouse men, the class of 2013.

I have to say that it's a little hard to follow—not Dr. Wilson, but a skinny guy with a funny name. [Laughter] Betsegaw Tadele, he's going to be doing something.

[At this point, thunder sounded in the background.]

I also have to say that you all are going to get wet. [Laughter] And I'd be out there with you if I could. [Laughter] But Secret Service gets nervous. [Laughter] So I'm going to have to stay here, dry. [Laughter] But know that I'm there with you in spirit. [Laughter]

Some of you are graduating summa cum laude. Some of you are graduating magna cum laude. I know some of you are just graduating, "thank you, Lordy." [Laughter] And that's appropriate because it's a Sunday. [Laughter]

I see some moms and grandmas here, aunts, in their Sunday best; although, they are upset about their hair getting messed up. [Laughter] Michelle would not be sitting in the rain. [Laughter] She has taught me about hair. [Laughter]
I want to congratulate all of you: the parents, the grandparents, the brothers and sisters, the family and friends who supported these young men in so many ways. This is your day as well. Just think about it: Your sons, your brothers, your nephews, they've spent the last 4 years far from home and close to Spelman, and yet they are still here today. So you've done something right. Graduates, give a big round of applause to your family for everything that they've done for you.

I know that some of you had to wait in long lines to get into today's ceremony. And I would apologize, but it did not have anything to do with security. Those graduates just wanted you to know what it's like to register for classes here. [Laughter] And this time of year brings a different kind of stress: every senior stopping by Gloster Hall over the past week making sure your name was actually on the list of students who met all the graduation requirements. If it wasn't on the list, you had to figure out why. Was it that library book you lent to that trifling roommate who didn't return it? [Laughter] Was it Dr. Johnson's policy class? Did you get enough Crown Forum credits?

On that last point, I'm going to exercise my power as President to declare this speech sufficient Crown Forum credits for any otherwise eligible student to graduate. That is my graduation gift to you. You have a special dispensation.

Now, graduates, I am humbled to stand here with all of you as an honorary Morehouse man. I finally made it. [Laughter] And as I do, I am mindful of an old saying: "You can always tell a Morehouse man, but you can't tell him much." [Laughter] And that makes my task a little more difficult, I suppose. But I think it also reflects the sense of pride that's always been part of this school's tradition.

Benjamin Mays, who served as the president of Morehouse for almost 30 years, understood that tradition better than anybody. He said, and I quote, "It will not be sufficient for Morehouse College, for any college, for that matter, to produce clever graduates; but rather honest men, men who can be trusted in public and private life, men who are sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society and who are willing to accept responsibility for correcting those ills."

It was that mission, not just to educate men, but to cultivate good men, strong men, upright men, that brought community leaders together just 2 years after the end of the Civil War. They assembled a list of 37 men, free Blacks and freed slaves, who would make up the first prospective class of what later became Morehouse College. Most of those first students had a desire to become teachers and preachers, to better themselves so they could help others do the same.

A century and a half later, times have changed. But the Morehouse mystique still endures. Some of you probably came here from communities where everybody looked like you. Others may have come here in search of a community. And I suspect that some of you probably felt a little bit of culture shock the first time you came together as a class in King's Chapel. All of a sudden, you weren't the only high school sports captain, you weren't the only student council president. You were suddenly in a group of high achievers, and that meant you were expected to do something more.

And that's the unique sense of purpose that this place has always infused: the conviction that this is a training ground not only for individual success, but for leadership that can change the world.

Dr. King was just 15 years old when he enrolled here at Morehouse. He was an unknown, undersized, unassuming young freshman who lived at home with his parents. And I think it's fair to say he wasn't the coolest kid on campus; for the suits he wore, his classmates called him Tweed. But his education at Morehouse helped to forge the intellect, the discipline, the compassion, the soul force that would transform America. It was here that he was introduced to the writings of Gandhi and Thoreau and the theory of civil disobedience. It was here that professors encouraged him to look past the world as it was and fight for the world as it should be. And it was here, at Morehouse, as Dr. King later wrote, where "I realized that nobody . . . was afraid."
Not even of some bad weather. I added on that part. [Laughter] I know it’s wet out there. But Dr. Wilson told me you all had a choice and decided to do it out here anyway. That’s a Morehouse man talking.

Now, think about it: For Black men in the forties and the fifties, the threat of violence, the constant humiliations, large and small, the uncertainty that you could support a family, the gnawing doubts born of the Jim Crow culture that told you every day that somehow you were inferior, the temptation to shrink from the world, to accept your place, to avoid risks, to be afraid?that temptation was necessarily strong.

And yet here, under the tutelage of men like Dr. Mays, young Martin learned to be unafraid. And he, in turn, taught others to be unafraid. And over time, he taught a nation to be unafraid. And over the last 50 years, thanks to the moral force of Dr. King and a Moses generation that overcame their fear and their cynicism and their despair, barriers have come tumbling down, and new doors of opportunity have swung open, and laws and hearts and minds have been changed to the point where someone who looks just like you can somehow come to serve as President of these United States of America.

So the history we share should give you hope. The future we share should give you hope. You’re graduating into an improving job market. You’re living in a time when advances in technology and communication put the world at your fingertips. Your generation is uniquely poised for success unlike any generation of African Americans that came before it.

But that doesn’t mean we don’t have work, because if we’re honest with ourselves, we know that too few of our brothers have the opportunities that you’ve had here at Morehouse. In troubled neighborhoods all across this country, many of them heavily African American, too few of our citizens have role models to guide them. Communities just a couple of miles from my house in Chicago, communities just a couple miles from here, they’re places where jobs are still too scarce and wages are still too low; where schools are underfunded and violence is pervasive; where too many of our men spend their youths, not behind a desk in a classroom, but hanging out on the streets or brooding behind a jail cell.

My job as President is to advocate for policies that generate more opportunity for everybody: policies that strengthen the middle class and give more people the chance to climb their way into the middle class, policies that create more good jobs and reduce poverty and educate more children and give more families the security of health care and protect more of our children from the horrors of gun violence. That’s my job. Those are matters of public policy, and it is important for all of us?Black, White, and Brown?to advocate for an America where everybody has got a fair shot in life. Not just some. Not just a few.

But along with collective responsibilities, we have individual responsibilities. There are some things, as Black men, we can only do for ourselves. There are some things, as Morehouse men, that you are obliged to do for those still left behind. As Morehouse men, you now wield something even more powerful than the diploma you’re about to collect, and that’s the power of your example.

So what I ask of you today is the same thing I ask of every graduating class I address: Use that power for something larger than yourself. Live up to President Mays’s challenge. Be "sensitive to the wrongs, the suffering, and the injustices of society." And be "willing to accept responsibility for correcting those ills."

I know that some of you came to Morehouse from communities where life was about keeping your head down and looking out for yourself. Maybe you feel like you escaped and now you can take your degree and get that fancy job and the nice house and the nice car and never look back. And don’t get me wrong, with all those student loans you’ve had to take out, I know you’ve got to earn some money. With doors open to you that your parents and grandparents could not even imagine, no one expects you to take a vow of poverty. But I will say, it betrays a poverty of ambition if all you think about is what goods you can buy instead of what good you can do.

So yes, go get that law degree. But if you do, ask yourself if the only option is to defend the rich and the powerful or if you can also find some time to defend the powerless. Sure, go get your MBA or start that business. We need Black businesses out there. But ask yourselves what broader purpose your business might serve in putting people back to
work or transforming a neighborhood. The most successful CEOs I know didn't start out intent just on making money; rather, they had a vision of how their product or service would change things, and the money followed.

Some of you may be headed to medical school to become doctors. But make sure you heal folks in underserved communities who really need it too. For generations, certain groups in this country, especially African Americans, have been desperate in need of access to quality, affordable health care. And as a society, we're finally beginning to change that. Those of you who are under age 26 already have the option to stay on your parent's health care plan. But all of you are heading into an economy where many young people expect not only to have multiple jobs, but multiple careers.

So starting October 1, because of the Affordable Care Act?otherwise known as Obamacare?you'll be able to shop for a quality, affordable plan that's yours and travels with you, a plan that will insure not only your health, but your dreams if you are sick or go?get in an accident. But we're going to need some doctors to make sure it works too. We've got to make sure everybody has good health in this country. It's not just good for you, it's good for this country. So you're going to have to spread the word to your fellow young people.

Which brings me to a second point: Just as Morehouse has taught you to expect more of yourselves, inspire those who look up to you to expect more of themselves. We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices. And I have to say, growing up, I made quite a few myself. Sometimes, I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a Black man down. I had a tendency sometimes to make excuses for me not doing the right thing. But one of the things that all of you have learned over the last 4 years is, there's no longer any room for excuses.

I understand there's a common fraternity creed here at Morehouse: "Excuses are tools of the incompetent used to build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothingness." Well, we've got no time for excuses. Not because the bitter legacy of slavery and segregation have vanished entirely; they have not. Not because racism and discrimination no longer exist; we know those are still out there. It's just that in today's hyperconnected, hypercompetitive world, with millions of young people from China and India and Brazil, many of whom started with a whole lot less than all of you did, all of them entering the global workforce alongside you, nobody is going to give you anything that you have not earned.

Nobody cares how tough your upbringing was. Nobody cares if you suffered some discrimination. And moreover, you have to remember that whatever you've gone through, it pales in comparison to the hardships previous generations endured, and they overcame them. And if they overcame them, you can overcome them too.

You now hail from a lineage and legacy of immeasurably strong men, men who bore tremendous burdens and still laid the stones for the path on which we now walk. You wear the mantle of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington and Ralph Bunche and Langston Hughes and George Washington Carver and Ralph Abernathy and Thurgood Marshall and, yes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These men were many things to many people. And they knew full well the role that racism played in their lives. But when it came to their own accomplishments and sense of purpose, they had no time for excuses.

Every one of you have a grandma or an uncle or a parent who's told you that at some point in life, as an African American, you have to work twice as hard as anyone else if you want to get by. I think President Mays put it even better. He said, "Whatever you do, strive to do it so well that no man living and no man dead and no man yet to be born can do it any better."

And I promise you, what was needed in Dr. Mays's time?that spirit of excellence and hard work and dedication and no excuses?is needed now more than ever. If you think you can just get over in this economy just because you have a Morehouse degree, you're in for a rude awakening. But if you stay hungry, if you keep hustling, if you keep on your grind and get other folks to do the same, nobody can stop you.
And when I talk about pursuing excellence and setting an example, I'm not just talking about in your professional life. One of today's graduates, Frederick Anderson?where's Frederick? Frederick, right here. I want?I know it's raining, but I'm going to tell about Frederick. Frederick started his college career in Ohio, only to find out that his high school sweetheart back in Georgia was pregnant. So he came back and enrolled in Morehouse to be closer to her. Pretty soon, helping raise a newborn and working night shifts became too much, so he started taking business classes at a technical college instead, doing everything from delivering newspapers to buffing hospital floors to support his family.

And then he enrolled at Morehouse a second time. But even with a job, he couldn't keep up with the cost of tuition. So after getting his degree from that technical school, this father of three decided to come back to Morehouse for a third time. As Frederick says, "God has a plan for my life, and He's not done with me yet."

And today, Frederick is a family man and a working man and a Morehouse man. And that's what I'm asking all of you to do: Keep setting an example for what it means to be a man. Be the best husband to your wife or your boyfriend or your partner. Be the best father you can be to your children, because nothing is more important.

I was raised by a heroic single mom, wonderful grandparents, made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you. But I sure wish I had had a father who was not only present, but involved. Didn't know my dad. And so my whole life, I've tried to be for Michelle and my girls what my father was not for my mother and me. I want to break that cycle where a father is not at home, where a father is not helping to raise that son or daughter. I want to be a better father, a better husband, a better man.

It's hard work that demands your constant attention and frequent sacrifice. And I promise you?Michelle will tell you?I'm not perfect. She's got a long list of my imperfections. [Laughter] Even now I'm still practicing, I'm still learning, still getting corrected in terms of how to be a fine husband and a good father. But I will tell you this: Everything else is unfulfilled if we fail at family, if we fail at that responsibility.

I know that when I am on my deathbed someday, I will not be thinking about any particular legislation I pass. I will not be thinking about a policy I promoted. I will not be thinking about the speech I gave. I will not be thinking the Nobel Prize I received. I will be thinking about that walk I took with my daughters. I'll be thinking about a lazy afternoon with my wife. I'll be thinking about sitting around the dinner table and seeing them happy and healthy and knowing that they were loved. And I'll be thinking about whether I did right by all of them.

So be a good role model. Set a good example for that young brother coming up. If you know somebody who's not on point, go back and bring that brother along. Those who've been left behind, who haven't had the same opportunities we have, they need to hear from you. You've got to be engaged on the barbershop, on the basketball court, at church, spend time and energy and presence to give people opportunities and a chance. Pull them up, expose them, support their dreams. Don't put them down.

We've got to teach them?just like what we have to learn?what it means to be a man: to serve your city like Maynard Jackson; to shape the culture like Spike Lee; to be like Chester Davenport, one of the first people to integrate the University of Georgia Law School. When he got there, nobody would sit next to him in class. But Chester didn't mind. Later on, he said: "It was the right thing for me to do. Someone needed to be the first." And today Chester is here celebrating his 50th reunion. Where is Chester Davenport? He's here.

So if you've had role models?fathers, brothers like that?thank them today. And if you haven't, commit yourself to being that man to somebody else.

And finally, as you do these things, do them not just for yourself, but don't even do them just for the African American community. I want you to set your sights higher. At the turn of the last century, W.E.B. Du Bois spoke about the
"talented tenth," a class of highly educated, socially conscious leaders in the Black community. But it's not just the African American community that needs you. The country needs you. The world needs you.

As Morehouse men, many of you know what it's like to be an outsider, know what it's like to be marginalized, know what it's like to feel the sting of discrimination. And that's an experience that a lot of Americans share. Hispanic Americans know that feeling when somebody asks them where they come from or tell them to go back. Gay and lesbian Americans feel it when a stranger passes judgment on their parenting skills or the love that they share. Muslim Americans feel it when they're stared at with suspicion because of their faith. Any woman who knows the injustice of earning less pay for doing the same work, she knows what it's like to be on the outside looking in.

So your experiences give you special insight that today's leaders need. If you tap into that experience, it should endow you with empathy: the understanding of what it's like to walk in somebody else's shoes, to see through their eyes; to know what it's like when you're not born on third base, thinking you hit a triple. It should give you the ability to connect. It should give you a sense of compassion and what it means to overcome barriers.

And I will tell you, class of 2013, whatever success I have achieved, whatever positions of leadership I have held have depended less on Ivy League degrees or SAT scores or GPAs and have instead been due to that sense of connection and empathy, the special obligation I felt, as a Black man like you, to help those who need it most: people who didn't have the opportunities that I had. Because there but for the grace of God, go I; I might have been in their shoes. I might have been in prison. I might have been unemployed. I might not have been able to support a family. And that motivates me.

So it's up to you to widen your circle of concern, to care about justice for everybody: White, Black, and Brown. Everybody. Not just in your own community, but also across this country and around the world. To make sure everyone has a voice and everybody gets a seat at the table; that everybody, no matter what you look like or where you come from, what your last name is, where it doesn't matter, everybody gets a chance to walk through those doors of opportunity if they are willing to work hard enough.

When Leland Shelton was 4 years old? where's Leland? Stand up, Leland. When Leland Shelton was 4 years old, social services took him away from his mama, put him in the care of his grandparents. By age 14, he was in the foster care system. Three years after that, Leland enrolled in Morehouse. And today he is graduating Phi Beta Kappa on his way to Harvard Law School. But he's not stopping there. As a member of the National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council, he plans to use his law degree to make sure kids like him don't fall through the cracks. And it won't matter whether they're Black kids or Brown kids or White kids or Native American kids, because he'll understand what they're going through. And he'll be fighting for them. He'll be in their corner. That's leadership. That's a Morehouse man right there.

That's what we've come to expect from you, Morehouse, a legacy of leaders, not just in our Black community, but for the entire American community: to recognize the burdens you carry with you, but to resist the temptation to use them as excuses; to transform the way we think about manhood and set higher standards for ourselves and for others; to be successful, but also to understand that each of us has responsibilities not just to ourselves, but to one another and to future generations. Men who refuse to be afraid. Men who refuse to be afraid.

Members of the class of 2013, you are heirs to a great legacy. You have within you that same courage and that same strength, the same resolve as the men who came before you. That's what being a Morehouse man is all about. That's what being an American is all about.

Success may not come quickly or easily. But if you strive to do what's right, if you work harder and dream bigger, if you set an example in your own lives and do your part to help meet the challenges of our times, then I am confident that, together, we will continue the never-ending task of perfecting our Union.

Congratulations, class of 2013. God bless you, God bless Morehouse, and God bless the United States of America.
NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. on Century Campus. In his remarks, he referred to John Silvanus Wilson, president, Betsegaw Tadele, 2013 valedictorian, and Tobe Johnson, professor of political science, Morehouse College; filmmaker Spike Lee; and Chester C. Davenport, managing director, Georgetown Partners, LLC.

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President Obama delivers the commencement address during a ceremony at Morehouse College on Sunday in Atlanta, Georgia.

President Obama, on Sunday, delivered a rare, very personal commencement address at Morehouse College, the historically black, all-male institution that is the alma mater of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

It was a short speech, but Obama did not shy away the subject of race and responsibility. We've embedded video of the address below, along with two excerpts you should read. They are taken from his prepared remarks:

On Personal Responsibility:

"We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices. Growing up, I made a few myself. And I have to confess, sometimes I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a black man down. But one of the things you've learned over the last four years is that there's no longer any room for excuses. I understand that there's a common fraternity creed here at Morehouse: 'excuses are tools of the incompetent, used to build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothingness.' We've got no time for excuses - not because the bitter legacies of slavery and segregation have vanished entirely; they haven't. Not because racism and discrimination no longer exist; that's still out there. It's just that in today's hyperconnected, hypercompetitive world, with a billion young people from China and India and Brazil entering the global workforce alongside you, nobody is going to give you anything you haven't earned. And whatever hardships you may experience because of your race, they pale in comparison to the hardships previous generations endured - and overcame.

"You now hail from a lineage and legacy of immeasurably strong men - men who bore tremendous burdens and still laid the stones for the path on which we now walk. You wear the mantle of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, Ralph Bunche and Langston Hughes, George Washington Carver and Ralph Abernathy, Thurgood Marshall and yes, Dr. King. These men were many things to many people. They knew full well the role that racism played in their lives. But when it came to their own accomplishments and sense of purpose, they had no time for excuses."

On Family:

"I was raised by a heroic single mother and wonderful grandparents who made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you. But I still wish I had a father who was not only present, but involved. And so my whole life, I've tried to be for Michelle and my girls what my father wasn't for my mother and me. I've tried to be a better husband, a better father, and a better man.

"It's hard work that demands your constant attention, and frequent sacrifice. And Michelle will be the first to tell you that I'm not perfect. Even now, I'm still learning how to be the best husband and father I can be. Because success in everything else is unfulfilling if we fail at family. I know that when I'm on my deathbed someday, I won't be thinking about any particular legislation I passed, or policy I promoted; I won't be thinking about the speech I gave, or the Nobel Prize I received. I'll be thinking about a walk I took with my daughters. A lazy afternoon with my wife. Whether I did right by all of them.
"Be a good role model and set a good example for that young brother coming up. If you know someone who isn't on point, go back and bring that brother along. The brothers who have been left behind – who haven’t had the same opportunities we have – they need to hear from us. We’ve got to be in the barbershops with them, at church with them, spending time and energy and presence helping pull them up, exposing them to new opportunities, and supporting their dreams. We have to teach them what it means to be a man – to serve your city like Maynard Jackson; to shape the culture like Spike Lee.

Chester Davenport was one of the first people to integrate the University of Georgia law school. When he got there, no one would sit next to him in class. But Chester didn’t mind. Later on, he said, ‘It was the thing for me to do. Someone needed to be the first.’ Today, Chester is here celebrating his 50th reunion. If you’ve had role models, fathers, brothers like that – thank them today. If you haven’t, commit yourself to being that man for someone else.”

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Remarks by President Barack Obama at Morehouse College Commencement Ceremony (As Released by the White House) Location: Century Campus, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia Time: 12:06 p.m. EDT Date: Sunday, May 19, 2013

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: Hello, Morehouse! (Applause.) Thank you, everybody. Please be seated.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I love you!

PRESIDENT OBAMA: I love you back. (Laughter.) That is why I am here.

I have to say that it is one of the great honors of my life to be able to address this gathering here today. I want to thank Dr. Wilson for his outstanding leadership, and the Board of Trustees. We have Congressman Cedric Richmond and Sanford Bishop -- both proud alumni of this school, as well as Congressman Hank Johnson. And one of my dear friends and a great inspiration to us all -- the great John Lewis is here. (Applause.) We have your outstanding Mayor, Mr. Kasim Reed, in the house. (Applause.)

To all the members of the Morehouse family. And most of all, congratulations to this distinguished group of Morehouse Men -- the Class of 2013. (Applause.)

I have to say that it's a little hard to follow -- not Dr. Wilson, but a skinny guy with a funny name. (Laughter.) Betsegaw Tadele -- he's going to be doing something.
I also have to say that you all are going to get wet. (Laughter.) And I'd be out there with you if I could. (Laughter.) But Secret Service gets nervous. (Laughter.) So I'm going to have to stay here, dry. (Laughter.) But know that I'm there with you in spirit. (Laughter.)

Some of you are graduating summa cum laude. (Applause.) Some of you are graduating magna cum laude. (Applause.) I know some of you are just graduating, "thank you, Lordy." (Laughter and applause.) That's appropriate because it's a Sunday. (Laughter.)

I see some moms and grandmas here, aunts, in their Sunday best -- although they are upset about their hair getting messed up. (Laughter.) Michelle would not be sitting in the rain. (Laughter.) She has taught me about hair. (Laughter.)

I want to congratulate all of you -- the parents, the grandparents, the brothers and sisters, the family and friends who supported these young men in so many ways. This is your day, as well. Just think about it -- your sons, your brothers, your nephews -- they spent the last four years far from home and close to Spelman, and yet they are still here today. (Applause.) So you've done something right. Graduates, give a big round of applause to your family for everything that they've done for you. (Applause.)

I know that some of you had to wait in long lines to get into today's ceremony. And I would apologize, but it did not have anything to do with security. Those graduates just wanted you to know what it's like to register for classes here. (Laughter and applause.) And this time of year brings a different kind of stress -- every senior stopping by Gloster Hall over the past week making sure your name was actually on the list of students who met all the graduation requirements. (Applause.) If it wasn't on the list, you had to figure out why. Was it that library book you lent to that trifling roommate who didn't return it? (Laughter.) Was it Dr. Johnson's policy class? (Applause.) Did you get enough Crown Forum credits? (Applause.)

On that last point, I'm going to exercise my power as President to declare this speech sufficient Crown Forum credits for any otherwise eligible student to graduate. That is my graduation gift to you. (Applause.) You have a special dispensation.

Now, graduates, I am humbled to stand here with all of you as an honorary Morehouse Man. (Applause.) I finally made it. (Laughter.) And as I do, I'm mindful of an old saying: "You can always tell a Morehouse Man -- (applause) -- but you can't tell him much." (Applause.) And that makes my task a little more difficult, I suppose. But I think it also reflects the sense of pride that's always been part of this school's tradition.

Benjamin Mays, who served as the president of Morehouse for almost 30 years, understood that tradition better than anybody. He said -- and I quote -- "It will not be sufficient for Morehouse College, for any college, for that matter, to produce clever graduates -- but rather honest men, men who can be trusted in public and private life -- men who are sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society and who are willing to accept responsibility for
It was that mission – not just to educate men, but to cultivate good men, strong men, upright men – that brought community leaders together just two years after the end of the Civil War. They assembled a list of 37 men, free blacks and freed slaves, who would make up the first prospective class of what later became Morehouse College. Most of those first students had a desire to become teachers and preachers – to better themselves so they could help others do the same.

A century and a half later, times have changed. But the "Morehouse Mystique" still endures. Some of you probably came here from communities where everybody looked like you. Others may have come here in search of a community. And I suspect that some of you probably felt a little bit of culture shock the first time you came together as a class in King's Chapel. All of a sudden, you weren't the only high school sports captain, you weren't the only student council president. You were suddenly in a group of high achievers, and that meant you were expected to do something more.

That's the unique sense of purpose that this place has always infused -- the conviction that this is a training ground not only for individual success, but for leadership that can change the world.

Dr. King was just 15 years old when he enrolled here at Morehouse. He was an unknown, undersized, unassuming young freshman who lived at home with his parents. And I think it's fair to say he wasn't the coolest kid on campus – for the suits he wore, his classmates called him "Tweed." But his education at Morehouse helped to forge the intellect, the discipline, the compassion, the soul force that would transform America. It was here that he was introduced to the writings of Gandhi and Thoreau, and the theory of civil disobedience. It was here that professors encouraged him to look past the world as it was and fight for the world as it should be. And it was here, at Morehouse, as Dr. King later wrote, where "I realized that nobody -- was afraid."

Not even of some bad weather. I added on that part. (Laughter.) I know it's wet out there. But Dr. Wilson told me you all had a choice and decided to do it out here anyway. (Applause.) That's a Morehouse Man talking.

Now, think about it. For black men in the '40s and the '50s, the threat of violence, the constant humiliations, large and small, the uncertainty that you could support a family, the gnawing doubts born of the Jim Crow culture that told you every day that somehow you were inferior, the temptation to shrink from the world, to accept your place, to avoid risks, to be afraid -- that temptation was necessarily strong.

And yet, here, under the tutelage of men like Dr. Mays, young Martin learned to be unafraid. And he, in turn, taught others to be unafraid. And over time, he taught a nation to be unafraid. And over the last 50 years, thanks to the moral force of Dr. King and a Moses generation that overcame their fear and their cynicism and their despair, barriers have come tumbling down, and new doors of opportunity have swung open, and laws and hearts and minds have been changed to the point where someone who looks just like you can somehow come to...
serve as President of these United States of America. (Applause.)

So the history we share should give you hope. The future we share should give you hope. You're graduating into an improving job market. You're living in a time when advances in technology and communication put the world at your fingertips. Your generation is uniquely poised for success unlike any generation of African Americans that came before it.

But that doesn't mean we don't have work -- because if we're honest with ourselves, we know that too few of our brothers have the opportunities that you've had here at Morehouse.

In troubled neighborhoods all across this country -- many of them heavily African American -- too few of our citizens have role models to guide them. Communities just a couple miles from my house in Chicago, communities just a couple miles from here -- they're places where jobs are still too scarce and wages are still too low; where schools are underfunded and violence is pervasive; where too many of our men spend their youth not behind a desk in a classroom, but hanging out on the streets or brooding behind a jail cell.

My job, as President, is to advocate for policies that generate more opportunity for everybody -- policies that strengthen the middle class and give more people the chance to climb their way into the middle class. Policies that create more good jobs and reduce poverty, and educate more children, and give more families the security of health care, and protect more of our children from the horrors of gun violence. That's my job. Those are matters of public policy, and it is important for all of us -- black, white and brown -- to advocate for an America where everybody has got a fair shot in life. Not just some. Not just a few. (Applause.)

But along with collective responsibilities, we have individual responsibilities. There are some things, as black men, we can only do for ourselves. There are some things, as Morehouse Men, that you are obliged to do for those still left behind. As Morehouse Men, you now wield something even more powerful than the diploma you're about to collect -- and that's the power of your example.

So what I ask of you today is the same thing I ask of every graduating class I address: Use that power for something larger than yourself. Live up to President Mays's challenge. Be "sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society." And be "willing to accept responsibility for correcting (those) ills."

I know that some of you came to Morehouse from communities where life was about keeping your head down and looking out for yourself. Maybe you feel like you escaped, and now you can take your degree and get that fancy job and the nice house and the nice car -- and never look back. And don't get me wrong -- with all those student loans you've had to take out, I know you've got to earn some money. With doors open to you that your parents and grandparents could not even imagine, no one expects you to take a vow of poverty. But I will say it betrays a poverty of ambition if all you think about is what goods you can buy instead of what good you can do. (Applause.)
So, yes, go get that law degree. But if you do, ask yourself if the only option is to defend the rich and the powerful, or if you can also find some time to defend the powerless. Sure, go get your MBA, or start that business. We need black businesses out there. But ask yourselves what broader purpose your business might serve, in putting people to work, or transforming a neighborhood. The most successful CEOs I know didn't start out intent just on making money -- rather, they had a vision of how their product or service would change things, and the money followed. (Applause.)

Some of you may be headed to medical school to become doctors. But make sure you heal folks in underserved communities who really need it, too. For generations, certain groups in this country -- especially African Americans -- have been desperate in need of access to quality, affordable health care. And as a society, we're finally beginning to change that. Those of you who are under the age of 26 already have the option to stay on your parent's health care plan. But all of you are heading into an economy where many young people expect not only to have multiple jobs, but multiple careers.

So starting October 1st, because of the Affordable Care Act -- otherwise known as Obamacare -- you'll be able to shop for a quality, affordable plan that's yours and travels with you -- a plan that will insure not only your health, but your dreams if you are sick or get in an accident. But we're going to need some doctors to make sure it works, too. We've got to make sure everybody has good health in this country. It's not just good for you, it's good for this country. So you're going to have to spread the word to your fellow young people.

Which brings me to a second point: Just as Morehouse has taught you to expect more of yourselves, inspire those who look up to you to expect more of themselves. We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices. And I have to say, growing up, I made quite a few myself. Sometimes I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a black man down. I had a tendency sometimes to make excuses for me not doing the right thing. But one of the things that all of you have learned over the last four years is there's no longer any room for excuses. (Applause.)

I understand there's a common fraternity creed here at Morehouse: "Excuses are tools of the incompetent used to build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothingness." Well, we've got no time for excuses. Not because the bitter legacy of slavery and segregation have vanished entirely; they have not. Not because racism and discrimination no longer exist; we know those are still out there. It's just that in today's hyperconnected, hypercompetitive world, with millions of young people from China and India and Brazil -- many of whom started with a whole lot less than all of you did -- all of them entering the global workforce alongside you, nobody is going to give you anything that you have not earned. (Applause.)

Nobody cares how tough your upbringing was. Nobody cares if you suffered some discrimination. And moreover, you have to remember that whatever you've gone through, it pales in comparison to the hardships previous generations
endured -- and they overcame them. And if they overcame them, you can overcome them, too. (Applause.)

You now hail from a lineage and legacy of immeasurably strong men -- men who bore tremendous burdens and still laid the stones for the path on which we now walk. You wear the mantle of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, and Ralph Bunche and Langston Hughes, and George Washington Carver and Ralph Abernathy and Thurgood Marshall, and, yes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These men were many things to many people. And they knew full well the role that racism played in their lives. But when it came to their own accomplishments and sense of purpose, they had no time for excuses.

Every one of you have a grandma or an uncle or a parent who's told you that at some point in life, as an African American, you have to work twice as hard as anyone else if you want to get by. I think President Mays put it even better: He said, "Whatever you do, strive to do it so well that no man living and no man dead, and no man yet to be born can do it any better." (Applause.)

And I promise you, what was needed in Dr. Mays's time, that spirit of excellence, and hard work, and dedication, and no excuses is needed now more than ever. If you think you can just get over in this economy just because you have a Morehouse degree, you're in for a rude awakening. But if you stay hungry, if you keep hustling, if you keep on your grind and get other folks to do the same -- nobody can stop you. (Applause.)

And when I talk about pursuing excellence and setting an example, I'm not just talking about in your professional life. One of today's graduates, Frederick Anderson -- where's Frederick? Frederick, right here. (Applause.) I know it's raining, but I'm going to tell about Frederick. Frederick started his college career in Ohio, only to find out that his high school sweetheart back in Georgia was pregnant. So he came back and enrolled in Morehouse to be closer to her. Pretty soon, helping raise a newborn and working night shifts became too much, so he started taking business classes at a technical college instead -- doing everything from delivering newspapers to buffing hospital floors to support his family.

And then he enrolled at Morehouse a second time. But even with a job, he couldn't keep up with the cost of tuition. So after getting his degree from that technical school, this father of three decided to come back to Morehouse for a third time. (Applause.) As Frederick says, "God has a plan for my life, and He's not done with me yet."

And today, Frederick is a family man, and a working man, and a Morehouse Man. (Applause.) And that's what I'm asking all of you to do: Keep setting an example for what it means to be a man. (Applause.) Be the best husband to your wife, or you're your boyfriend, or your partner. Be the best father you can be to your children. Because nothing is more important.

I was raised by a heroic single mom, wonderful grandparents -- made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you. But I sure wish I had had a father who was not only present, but involved.
Didn't know my dad. And so my whole life, I've tried to be for Michelle and
my girls what my father was not for my mother and me. I want to break that
cycle where a father is not at home -- (applause) -- where a father is not
helping to raise that son or daughter. I want to be a better father, a better
husband, a better man.

It's hard work that demands your constant attention and frequent sacrifice.
And I promise you, Michelle will tell you I'm not perfect. She's got a long list
of my imperfections. (Laughter.) Even now, I'm still practicing, I'm still
learning, still getting corrected in terms of how to be a fine husband and a
good father. But I will tell you this: Everything else is unfulfilled if we
fail at family, if we fail at that responsibility. (Applause.)

I know that when I am on my deathbed someday, I will not be thinking about
any particular legislation I passed; I will not be thinking about a policy I
promoted; I will not be thinking about the speech I gave, I will not be thinking
the Nobel Prize I received. I will be thinking about that walk I took with my
daughters. I'll be thinking about a lazy afternoon with my wife. I'll be
thinking about sitting around the dinner table and seeing them happy and healthy
and knowing that they were loved. And I'll be thinking about whether I did
right by all of them.

So be a good role model, set a good example for that young brother coming up.
If you know somebody who's not on point, go back and bring that brother along --
those who've been left behind, who haven't had the same opportunities we have --
they need to hear from you. You've got to be engaged on the barbershops, on the
basketball court, at church, spend time and energy and presence to give people
opportunities and a chance. Pull them up, expose them, support their dreams.
Don't put them down.

We've got to teach them just like what we have to learn, what it means to be
a man -- to serve your city like Maynard Jackson; to shape the culture like
Spike Lee; to be like Chester Davenport, one of the first people to integrate
the University of Georgia Law School. When he got there, nobody would sit next
to him in class. But Chester didn't mind. Later on, he said, "It was the thing
for me to do. Someone needed to be the first." And today, Chester is here
celebrating his 50th reunion. Where is Chester Davenport? He's here.
(Applause.)

So if you've had role models, fathers, brothers like that -- thank them
today. And if you haven't, commit yourself to being that man to somebody else.

And finally, as you do these things, do them not just for yourself, but don't
even do them just for the African American community. I want you to set your
sights higher. At the turn of the last century, W.E.B. DuBois spoke about the
"talented tenth" -- a class of highly educated, socially conscious leaders in
the black community. But it's not just the African American community that
needs you. The country needs you. The world needs you.

As Morehouse Men, many of you know what it's like to be an outsider; know
what it's like to be marginalized; know what it's like to feel the sting of
discrimination. And that's an experience that a lot of Americans share. Hispanic Americans know that feeling when somebody asks them where they come from or tell them to go back. Gay and lesbian Americans feel it when a stranger passes judgment on their parenting skills or the love that they share. Muslim Americans feel it when they're stared at with suspicion because of their faith. Any woman who knows the injustice of earning less pay for doing the same work -- she knows what it's like to be on the outside looking in.

So your experiences give you special insight that today's leaders need. If you tap into that experience, it should endow you with empathy -- the understanding of what it's like to walk in somebody else's shoes, to see through their eyes, to know what it's like when you're not born on 3rd base, thinking you hit a triple. It should give you the ability to connect. It should give you a sense of compassion and what it means to overcome barriers.

And I will tell you, Class of 2013, whatever success I have achieved, whatever positions of leadership I have held have depended less on Ivy League degrees or SAT scores or GPAs, and have instead been due to that sense of connection and empathy -- the special obligation I felt, as a black man like you, to help those who need it most, people who didn't have the opportunities that I had -- because there but for the grace of God, go I -- I might have been in their shoes. I might have been in prison. I might have been unemployed. I might not have been able to support a family. And that motivates me.

So it's up to you to widen your circle of concern -- to care about justice for everybody, white, black and brown. Everybody. Not just in your own community, but also across this country and around the world. To make sure everyone has a voice, and everybody gets a seat at the table; that everybody, no matter what you look like or where you come from, what your last name is -- it doesn't matter, everybody gets a chance to walk through those doors of opportunity if they are willing to work hard enough.

When Leland Shelton was four years old -- where's Leland? (Applause.) Stand up, Leland. When Leland Shelton was four years old, social services took him away from his mama, put him in the care of his grandparents. By age 14, he was in the foster care system. Three years after that, Leland enrolled in Morehouse. And today he is graduating Phi Beta Kappa on his way to Harvard Law School. (Applause.) But he's not stopping there. As a member of the National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council, he plans to use his law degree to make sure kids like him don't fall through the cracks. And it won't matter whether they're black kids or brown kids or white kids or Native American kids, because he'll understand what they're going through. And he'll be fighting for them. He'll be in their corner. That's leadership. That's a Morehouse Man right there. (Applause.)

That's what we've come to expect from you, Morehouse -- a legacy of leaders -- not just in our black community, but for the entire American community. To recognize the burdens you carry with you, but to resist the temptation to use them as excuses. To transform the way we think about manhood, and set higher standards for ourselves and for others. To be successful, but also to understand that each of us has responsibilities not just to ourselves, but to
one another and to future generations. Men who refuse to be afraid. Men who refuse to be afraid.

Members of the Class of 2013, you are heirs to a great legacy. You have within you that same courage and that same strength, the same resolve as the men who came before you. That's what being a Morehouse Man is all about. That's what being an American is all about.

Success may not come quickly or easily. But if you strive to do what's right, if you work harder and dream bigger, if you set an example in your own lives and do your part to help meet the challenges of our time, then I'm confident that, together, we will continue the never-ending task of perfecting our union.


LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2013

The following information was released by the office of the Washington Attorney General:

Attorney General Bob Ferguson today announced he has selected Senior Counsel Pam Anderson as the new Torts Division Chief.

"Pam's background and expertise make her an excellent fit for this position," said Attorney General Bob Ferguson. "She is highly respected within the Attorney General's Office and throughout state government. Pam is a leader who is committed to public service, inspires dedication by example, and values diversity and collaboration in the workplace. Moreover, she has an excellent understanding of torts litigation and has substantial trial and appellate experience."
Anderson joined the Attorney General's Office in 1998 as an assistant attorney general in the SHO Division, and served as chief of the Mental Health Section. She moved to the Agriculture and Health Division in 2004, serving as a section chief and providing client advice and litigation support to the professional licensing programs within the Department of Health, the Health Care Authority, and various independent health care boards and commissions.

In 2007, Anderson transferred to the Torts Division and served as team leader for the DSHS Team. In 2009, she became section chief and served in that role until 2010 when she left the AGO for a brief period of time to serve as the Assistant General Counsel for the Tacoma School District. She returned to the AGO in 2011, as a section chief in the Agriculture and Health Division.

Anderson earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology cum laude from the University of Georgia, and her J.D. magna cum laude from the University of Georgia Law School, where she served as articles editor of the Law Review and was selected to the Order of the Coif.

"Pam has successfully fostered strong, productive relationships with her colleagues, client agencies, opposing counsel and external stakeholders," Ferguson said. "I am confident she will be an effective leader for the Torts Division."

LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2013
"So yes, go get that law degree. But if you do, ask yourself if the only option is to defend the rich and powerful, or if you can also find time to defend the powerless," Obama said. "Sure, go get your MBA, or start that business, we need black businesses out there. But ask yourself what broader purpose your business might serve, in putting people to work, or transforming a neighborhood."

"The most successful CEOs I know didn't start out intent on making money, rather, they had a vision of how their product or service would change things, and the money followed," he said.

For those headed to medical school, Obama said "make sure you heal folks in underserved communities who really need it, too."

Obama urged graduates to "inspire those who look up to you to expect more of themselves."

"Sometimes I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a black man down," he said. "I had a tendency to make excuses for me not doing the right thing. But one of the things that all of you have learned over the last four years is, there's no longer any room for excuses."

He told the graduates to pay attention to their families, saying success in every other aspect of life means nothing without success at home.

"I was raised by a heroic single mother and wonderful grandparents who made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you," he said. "But I still wish I had a father who was not only present, but involved. And so my whole life, I've tried to be for Michelle and my girls what my father wasn't for my mother and me. I've tried to be a better husband, a better father, and a better man.

It's hard work that demands your constant attention, and frequent sacrifice. And Michelle will be the first to tell you that I'm not perfect," he continued. "Even now, I'm still learning how to be the best husband and father I can be. Because success in everything else is unfulfilling if we fail at family.

I know that when I'm on my deathbed someday, I won't be thinking about any particular legislation I passed, or policy I promoted. I won't be thinking about the speech I gave, or the Nobel Prize I received," said Obama, 51. "I'll be thinking about a walk I took with my daughters, a lazy afternoon with my wife, whether I did right by all of them."

The speech was Obama's second commencement address of the season, following remarks last Sunday at Ohio State University in Columbus. His third and final graduation address will come Friday at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.

About 500 students received undergraduate degrees on Sunday and became "Morehouse Men."

President Obama's full remarks during the 2013 Morehouse College Commencement Ceremony are as follows:
Hello, Morehouse! Thank you Dr. Wilson, the Board of Trustees; Congressman Cedric Richmond and Sanford Bishop - both proud alumni of this school; Congressman Hank Johnson and the great John Lewis; Mayor Reed, and all the members of the Morehouse family. Most of all, congratulations to this distinguished group of Morehouse Men, the Class of 2013! Some of you are graduating summa cum laude, some of you are graduating magna cum laude, and I know some of you are just graduating, "thank you Lordy."

I see some good looking hats on the moms and grandmas here today. Which is appropriate, since we're here on Sunday, and folks are in their Sunday best. Congratulations to all of you - the parents and grandparents, brothers and sisters, family and friends who supported these young men in so many ways. This is your day, too. Just think about it - your sons and brothers have spent the last four years far from home and close to Spelman. And they still made it here today. So you must be doing something right. Graduates, give them a round of applause.

I know some of you had to wait in long lines to get into today's ceremony. I would apologize, but it didn't actually have anything to do with security. These graduates just wanted you to know what it's like to register for classes. And this time of year brings a different kind of stress, with every senior stopping by Gloster Hall over the past week making sure your name was on the list of students who've met all the graduation requirements. If it wasn't, you had to figure out why. Was it the library book you let your roommate borrow freshman year? Was it Dr. Johnson's policy class? Did you get enough Crown Forum credits?

I can help with that last one. Today, I am exercising my power as President to declare this speech sufficient Crown Forum credits for any otherwise-eligible student to graduate. Consider it my graduation gift to you.

Graduates, I am humbled to stand here with all of you as an honorary Morehouse Man. And as I do, I'm mindful of an old saying: "You can always tell a Morehouse Man, but you can't tell him much." That makes my task today a little more difficult, I suppose. But I think it also reflects the sense of pride that has always been a part of the Morehouse tradition.

Benjamin Mays, who served as the president of Morehouse for almost 30 years, understood that tradition perhaps better than anyone. He said, "It will not be sufficient for Morehouse College, for any college, for that matter, to produce clever graduates... but rather honest men, men who can be trusted in public and private life - men who are sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society and who are willing to accept responsibility for correcting [those] ills."

It was that mission - not just to educate men, but to cultivate good men - that brought community leaders together just two years after the end of the Civil War. They assembled a list of 37 men, free blacks and freed slaves, who would make up the first prospective class of what later became Morehouse College. Most of those first students had a desire to become teachers and preachers - to better themselves so they could help others do the same.
A century and a half later, times have changed. But the "Morehouse Mystique" endures. Some of you probably came here from communities where everyone looked like you. Others may have come here in search of that kind of community. And I suspect that some of you probably felt a little bit of culture shock the first time you came together as a class in King's Chapel. All of a sudden, you weren't the only high school sports captain or student council president. All of a sudden, among a group of high achievers, you were expected to be something more.

That's the unique sense of purpose that has always infused this place - the conviction that this is a training ground not only for individual success, but for leadership that can change the world.

Dr. King was just 15 years old when he enrolled here at Morehouse. He was an unknown, undersized, unassuming young freshman who lived at home with his parents. I think it's fair to say he wasn't the coolest kid on campus; for the suits he wore, his classmates called him "Tweed." But his education at Morehouse helped to forge the intellect, the soul force, the disciple and compassion that would transform America. It was here that he was introduced to the writings of Gandhi, and Thoreau, and the theory of civil disobedience. It was here that professors encouraged him to look past the world as it was and fight for the world as it should be.

And it was here, at Morehouse, as Dr. King later wrote, where "I realized that nobody... was afraid."

Think about that. For black men in the forties and fifties, the threat of violence, the constant humiliations, large and small, the gnawing doubts born of a Jim Crow culture that told you every day you were somehow inferior, the temptation to shrink from the world, to accept your place, to avoid risks, to be afraid, was necessarily strong. And yet, here, under the tutelage of men like Dr. Mays, young Martin learned to be unafraid. He, in turn, taught others to be unafraid. And over the last 50 years, thanks to the moral force of Dr. King and a Moses generation that overcame their fear, and cynicism, and despair, barriers have come tumbling down, new doors of opportunity have swung open; laws, hearts, and minds have been changed to the point where someone who looks like you can serve as President of the United States.

So the history we share should give you hope. And the future we share should give you hope. You're graduating into a job market that's improving. You live in a time when advances in technology and communications puts the world at your fingertips. Your generation is uniquely poised for success unlike any before it.

That doesn't mean we don't have more work to do together. Because if we're being honest with ourselves, too few of our brothers and sisters have the opportunities you've had here at Morehouse. In troubled neighborhoods all across the country - many of them heavily African-American - too few of our citizens have role models to guide them. Communities just a couple miles from my house in Chicago. Communities just a couple miles from here. They're places where jobs are still too scarce and wages are still too low; where schools are underfunded and violence is pervasive; where too many of our men spend their youth not behind a desk in a classroom, but hanging out on the streets or brooding behind bars.
My job, as President, is to advocate for policies that generate more opportunity for everybody - policies that strengthen the middle class and give more people the chance to climb their way into the middle class. Policies that create more good jobs and alleviate poverty, that educate more children, that give more families the security of health care, and protect more of our children from the horrors of gun violence. These are matters of public policy, and it is important for all of us, black, white and brown, to advocate for an America where everybody has a fair shot in life.

But along with collective responsibilities, we have individual responsibilities. There are some things, as black men, we can only do for ourselves. There are some things, as Morehouse Men, that you are obliged to do for those still left behind. As graduates - as Morehouse Men - you now wield something even more powerful than the diploma you are about to collect. And that's the power of your example.

So what I ask of you today is the same thing I ask of every graduating class I address: use that power for something larger than yourself.

Live up to President Mays' challenge. Be "sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society." And be "willing to accept responsibility for correcting [those] ills."

I know some of you came to Morehouse from communities where life was about keeping your head down and looking out for yourself. Maybe you feel like you escaped, and you can take your degree, get a fancy job and never look back. And don't get me wrong - with the heavy weight of student loans, with doors open to you that your parents and grandparents could scarcely imagine, no one expects you to take a vow of poverty. But I will say it betrays a poverty of ambition if all you think about is what goods you can buy instead of what good you can do. So yes, go get that law degree. But ask yourself if the only option is to defend the rich and powerful, or if you can also find time to defend the powerless. Yes, go get your MBA, or start that business. But ask yourself what broader purpose your business might serve, in putting people to work, or transforming a neighborhood. The most successful CEOs I know didn't start out intent on making money - rather, they had a vision of how their product or service would change things, and the money followed.

Some of you may be headed to medical school to become doctors. But make sure you heal folks in underserved communities who really need it, too. For generations, certain groups in our country - especially African-Americans - have been in desperate need of access to quality, affordable health care. And as a society, we are finally beginning to change that. Those of you who are under the age of 26 already have the option to stay on your parents' health care plan. But all of you are heading out into an economy where many young people expect not only have multiple jobs, but multiple careers. So starting October 1st, you'll be able to shop for a quality, affordable plan that's yours and that travels with you - a plan that will insure not only your health, but your dreams if you have an accident or get sick. That's good for you, it's good for this country, and you should spread the word to your fellow young people.
And that brings me to my second request of you: Just as Morehouse has taught you to expect more of yourself, inspire those who look up to you to expect more of themselves.

We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices. Growing up, I made a few myself. And I have to confess, sometimes I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a black man down. But one of the things you've learned over the last four years is that there's no longer any room for excuses. I understand that there's a common fraternity creed here at Morehouse: "excuses are tools of the incompetent, used to build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothingness." We've got no time for excuses - not because the bitter legacies of slavery and segregation have vanished entirely; they haven't. Not because racism and discrimination no longer exist; that's still out there. It's just that in today's hyperconnected, hypercompetitive world, with a billion young people from China and India and Brazil entering the global workforce alongside you, nobody is going to give you anything you haven't earned. And whatever hardships you may experience because of your race, they pale in comparison to the hardships previous generations endured - and overcame.

You now hail from a lineage and legacy of immeasurably strong men - men who bore tremendous burdens and still laid the stones for the path on which we now walk. You wear the mantle of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, Ralph Bunche and Langston Hughes, George Washington Carver and Ralph Abernathy, Thurgood Marshall and yes, Dr. King. These men were many things to many people. They knew full well the role that racism played in their lives. But when it came to their own accomplishments and sense of purpose, they had no time for excuses.

I'm sure every one of you has a grandma, an uncle, or a parent who's told you at some point in life that, as an African-American, you have to work twice as hard as anyone else if you want to get by. I think President Mays put it even better: "Whatever you do, strive to do it so well that no man living and no man dead, and no man yet to be born can do it any better." I promise you, what was needed in Dr. Mays' time, that spirit of excellence, and hard work, and dedication, is needed now more than ever. If you think you can get over in this economy, just because you have a Morehouse degree, you are in for a rude awakening. But if you stay hungry, keep hustling, keep on your grind and get other folks to do the same - nobody can stop you.

And when I talk about pursuing excellence, and setting an example, I'm not just talking about in your career. One of today's graduates, Frederick Anderson, started his college career in Ohio, only to find out that his high school sweetheart back in Georgia was pregnant. So he enrolled in Morehouse to be closer to her. Pretty soon, helping raise a newborn and working night shifts became too much, so he started taking business classes at a technical college instead - doing everything from delivering newspapers to buffing hospital floors to support his family. Then he enrolled at Morehouse a second time - but even with a job, he couldn't keep up with the cost of tuition. So after getting his degree from that technical school, the father of three decided to come back to Morehouse for a third time. As Frederick says, "God has a plan for my life, and he's not done with me yet."
Today, Frederick is a family man, a working man, and a Morehouse Man. And that’s what I’m asking all of you to do: keep setting an example for what it means to be a man. Be the best husband to your wife, or boyfriend to your partner, or father to your children that you can be. Because nothing is more important.

I was raised by a heroic single mother and wonderful grandparents who made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are Moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you. But I still wish I had a father who was not only present, but involved. And so my whole life, I’ve tried to be for Michelle and my girls what my father wasn’t for my mother and me. I’ve tried to be a better husband, a better father, and a better man.

It’s hard work that demands your constant attention, and frequent sacrifice. And Michelle will be the first to tell you that I’m not perfect. Even now, I’m still learning how to be the best husband and father I can be. Because success in everything else is unfulfilling if we fail at family. I know that when I’m on my deathbed someday, I won’t be thinking about any particular legislation I passed, or policy I promoted; I won’t be thinking about the speech I gave, or the Nobel Prize I received. I’ll be thinking about a walk I took with my daughters. A lazy afternoon with my wife. Whether I did right by all of them.

Be a good role model and set a good example for that young brother coming up. If you know someone who isn’t on point, go back and bring that brother along. The brothers who have been left behind - who haven’t had the same opportunities we have - they need to hear from us. We’ve got to be in the barbershops with them, at church with them, spending time and energy and presence helping pull them up, exposing them to new opportunities, and supporting their dreams. We have to teach them what it means to be a man - to serve your city like Maynard Jackson; to shape the culture like Spike Lee.

Chester Davenport was one of the first people to integrate the University of Georgia law school. When he got there, no one would sit next to him in class. But Chester didn’t mind. Later on, he said, “It was the thing for me to do. Someone needed to be the first.” Today, Chester is here celebrating his 50th reunion. If you’ve had role models, fathers, brothers like that - thank them today. If you haven’t, commit yourself to being that man for someone else.

Finally, as you do these things, do them not just for yourself or for the African-American community. I want you to set your sights higher. At the turn of the last century, W.E.B. DuBois spoke about the “talented tenth” - a class of highly-educated, socially-conscious leaders in the black community.

But it is not just the African-American community that needs you. The country needs you. The world needs you. See, as Morehouse Men, many of you know what it’s like to be an outsider; to be marginalized; to feel the sting of discrimination. That’s an experience that so many other Americans share. Hispanic Americans know that feeling when someone asks where they come from or tells them to go back. Gay and lesbian Americans feel it when a stranger passes judgment on their parenting skills or the love they share. Muslim Americans feel it when they’re stared at with suspicion because of their faith. Any woman who knows the injustice of earning less pay for doing the same work - she sure feels it.
So your experiences give you special insight that today's leaders need. If you tap into that experience, it should endow you with empathy - the understanding of what it's like to walk in somebody else's shoes. It should give you an ability to connect. It should give you a sense of what it means to overcome barriers.

Whatever success I achieved, whatever positions of leadership I've held, have depended less on Ivy League degrees or SAT scores or GPAs, and have instead been due to that sense of empathy and connection - the special obligation I felt, as a black man like you, to help those who needed it most; people who didn't have the opportunities that I had, because but for the grace of God, I might be in their shoes. So it's up to you to widen your circle of your concern - to create greater justice both in your own community, but also across our country. To make sure everyone has a voice; everyone gets a seat at the table; to make sure that everyone - no matter what they look like or where they come from, or who they love - gets a chance to walk through those doors of opportunity if they want it bad enough.

When Leland Shelton was four years old, social services took him away from his mother and put him in the care of his grandparents. By age 14, he was in the foster care system. Three years after that, Leland enrolled in Morehouse. Today he is graduating Phi Beta Kappa on his way to Harvard Law School. And as a member of the National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council, he plans to use his law degree to make sure kids like him don't fall through the cracks. It won't matter what they look like or where they come from, because they'll have someone like Leland - someone who knows what they've been through - in their corner.

That's what we've come to expect from you, Morehouse. A legacy of leaders - not just in our black community, but in our broader American community. To recognize the burdens you carry with you, but resist the temptation to use them as excuses. To transform the way we think about manhood, and set higher standards for yourselves and others. To be successful, but also to understand that each of us has responsibilities not only to ourselves, but to one another, and to future generations.

Men who refuse to be afraid. Members of the class of 2013, you are the heirs to a great legacy. You have within you the same courage; the same strength; the same resolve as the men who came before you.

That's what being a Morehouse Man is all about. That's what being an American is about. Success may not come quickly or easily. But if you strive to do what's right; if you work harder and dream bigger; if you set an example in your own lives and do your part to help meet the challenges of our time, then I am confident that, together, we will continue the never-ending task of perfecting our union.

Congratulations, class of 2013. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

Information from The Associated Press contributed to this report.
Fellowship to help Gainesville student study law at Mercer

By Savannah King
sking@gainesvilletimes.com
POSTED: May 20, 2013 12:27 a.m.

Whit Carmon was stepping off the bus after delivering his final term paper at the University of Georgia when his phone rang.

Carmon, 22, of Gainesville, said he wasn't in the mood to answer a call from an unknown number but his friend encouraged him, saying "you never know who it's going to be."

"And sure enough I picked up the phone and sat there with my jaw at a 40-degree angle," Carmon said, laughing. "I actually had to stop myself for a minute and said 'Can I call you back?' because I really did just have to maintain or regain some sort of grounding in reality."

Mercer University in Macon.

The scholarship covers full tuition for three years of law school. Carmon will receive a $6,000 summer community service fellowship for working in public service offices in the summer.

Carmon had applied for a similar scholarship earlier. It wasn't awarded to him, so he was surprised to learn he'd been chosen for the public service scholarship. Students do not have to apply to receive the scholarship Carmon was given.

"It just came out of left field," Carmon said. "I called my mom and said 'Where do we go from here?' and she said 'You know that's up to you.' So I took a moment and called (the school) back and I really haven't looked back since. It was a really nice reprieve from the 25-page paper."

After being rejected for the scholarship he'd applied for, Carmon was making plans to study law at the University of Georgia where he'd recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in English.

Carmon said he doesn't yet know which area of the law he will focus on but expects contract law will suit his specific skill set best.

Carmon has had a strong interest in law since his sophomore year of college and has shadowed several Gainesville attorneys to make sure he is interested in law as a career.

"Frankly, it was something I could see myself doing for an extended period of time," Carmon said. "It just sort of clicked."

Carmon said he feels blessed to have the opportunity to attend the university and to be able to focus on his studies rather than the financial burden that would have otherwise been a factor.

However, he said he's most excited about the opportunity to learn more about public service. He
Fellowship to help Gainesville student study law at Mercer

http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/section/6/article/84032/

He said his relationships with a few community organizations such as the Georgia Mountain Food Bank and the North Georgia Community Foundation have shaped his desire to help others and the community.

Kay Blackstock, executive director of the Georgia Mountain Food Bank, is Carmon's mother.

"I think my mom has been a real strong role model for me," Carmon said. "She's been a real deft example of what it means to commit yourself to someone else and a cause that stays altruistic, stays connected to the community, and those two things are very important to me."

Carmon said he was also very strongly influenced by two Gainesville men, William Slack and Jim Mathis.

Blackstock worked for Mathis at the North Georgia Community Foundation for a number of years, Carmon was often involved in projects at a young age.

"I think Whit will do wonderful," Mathis said. "I have high hopes for him and I'm always impressed by what a fine young man he's turned out to be."
REMARKS BY PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AT MOREHOUSE COLLEGE...FINAL

May 20 2013 01:32:33

Remarks by President Barack Obama at Morehouse College Commencement Ceremony
(As Released by the White House) Location: Century Campus, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia Time: 12:06 p.m. EDT Date: Sunday, May 19, 2013

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: Hello, Morehouse! (Applause.) Thank you, everybody. Please be seated.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I love you!

PRESIDENT OBAMA: I love you back. (Laughter.) That is why I am here.

I have to say that it is one of the great honors of my life to be able to address this gathering here today. I want to thank Dr. Wilson for his outstanding leadership, and the Board of Trustees. We have Congressman Cedric Richmond and Sanford Bishop -- both proud alumni of this school, as well as Congressman Hank Johnson. And one of my dear friends and a great inspiration to us all -- the great John Lewis is here. (Applause.) We have your outstanding Mayor, Mr. Kasim Reed, in the house. (Applause.)

To all the members of the Morehouse family. And most of all, congratulations to this distinguished group of Morehouse Men -- the Class of 2013. (Applause.)

I have to say that it's a little hard to follow -- not Dr. Wilson, but a skinny guy with a funny name. (Laughter.) Betsegaw Tadele -- he's going to be doing something.

I also have to say that you all are going to get wet. (Laughter.) And I'd be out there with you if I could. (Laughter.)

But Secret Service gets nervous. (Laughter.) So I'm going to have to stay here, dry. (Laughter.) But know that I'm there with you in spirit. (Laughter.)

I see some moms and grandmas here, aunts, in their Sunday best -- although they are upset about their hair getting messed up. (Laughter.) Michelle would not be sitting in the rain. (Laughter.)

She has taught me about hair. (Laughter.)

I want to congratulate all of you -- the parents, the grandparents, the brothers and sisters, the family and friends who supported these young men in so many ways. This is your day, as well. Just think about it -- your sons, your brothers, your nephews -- they spent the last four years far from home and close to Spelman, and yet they are still here today. (Applause.) So you've done something right. Graduates, give a big round of applause to your family for everything that they've done for you. (Applause.)

I know that some of you had to wait in long lines to get into today's ceremony. And I would apologize, but it did not have anything to do with security. Those graduates just wanted you to know what it's like to register for classes here. (Laughter and applause.) And the time of year brings a different kind of stress -- every senior stopping by Gloster Hall over the past week making sure your name was actually on the list of students who met all the graduation requirements. (Applause.) If it wasn't on the list, you had to figure out why. Was it that library book you lent to that trifling roommate who didn't return it? (Laughter.) Was it Dr. Johnson's policy class? (Applause.) Did you get enough Crown Forum credits? (Applause.)

On that last point, I'm going to exercise my power as President to declare this speech sufficient Crown Forum credits for any otherwise eligible student to graduate. That is my graduation gift to you. (Applause.) You have a special dispensation.

Now, graduates, I am humbled to stand here with all of you as an honorary Morehouse Man. (Applause.) I finally made it. (Laughter.)

And as I do, I'm mindful of an old saying: "You can always tell a Morehouse Man -- (applause) -- but you can't tell him much." (Applause.) And that makes my task a little more difficult, I suppose. But I think it also reflects the sense of pride that's always been part of this school's tradition.

Benjamin Mays, who served as the president of Morehouse for almost 30 years, understood that tradition better than anybody. He said -- and I quote -- "It will not be sufficient for Morehouse College, for any college, for that matter, to produce clever graduates -- but rather honest men, men who can be trusted in public and private life -- men who are sensitive to the wrongs, the sufferings, and the injustices of society and who are willing to accept responsibility for correcting (those) ills."
That's the unique sense of purpose that this place has always infused -- the conviction that this is a training ground not only for individual success, but for leadership that can change the world.

Dr. King was just 15 years old when he enrolled here at Morehouse. He was an unknown, undersized, unassuming freshman who lived at home with his parents. And I think it's fair to say he wasn't the coolest kid on campus -- for the suits he wore, his classmates called him "Tweed." But his education at Morehouse helped to forge the intellect, the discipline, the compassion, the soul force that would transform America. It was here that he was introduced to the writings of Gandhi and Thoreau, and the theory of civil disobedience. It was here that professors encouraged him to look past the world as it was and fight for the world as it should be. And it was here, at Morehouse, as Dr. King later wrote, where "I realized that nobody -- was afraid."

Not even of some bad weather. I added on that part. (Laughter.)

I know it's wet out there. But Dr. Wilson told me you all had a choice and decided to do it out here anyway. (Applause.) That's a Morehouse Man talking.

Now, think about it. For black men in the '40s and the '50s, the threat of violence, the constant humiliations, large and small, the uncertainty that you could support a family, the gnawing doubts born of the Jim Crow culture that told you every day that somehow you were inferior, the temptation to shrink from the world, to accept your place, to avoid risks, to be afraid -- that temptation was necessarily strong.

And yet, here, under the tutelage of men like Dr. Mays, you're taught to be unafraid. And he, in turn, taught others to be unafraid. And over time, he taught a nation to be unafraid. And over the last 50 years, thanks to the moral force of Dr. King and a Moses generation that overcame their fear and their cynicism and their despair, barriers have come tumbling down, and new doors of opportunity have swung open, and laws and hearts and minds have been changed to the point where someone who looks just like you can somehow come to serve as President of these United States of America. (Applause.)

So the only reason we share should give you hope. The future we share should give you hope. You're graduating into an improving job market. You're living in a time when advances in technology and communication put the world at your fingertips. Your generation is uniquely poised for success unlike any generation of African Americans that came before it.

But that doesn't mean we don't have work -- because if we're honest with ourselves, we know that too few of our brothers have the opportunities that you've had here at Morehouse.

In troubled neighborhoods all across this country -- many of them heavily African American -- too few of our citizens have role models to guide them. Communities just a couple miles from my house in Chicago, communities just a couple miles from here -- they're places where jobs are still too scarce and wages are still too low, where schools are underfunded and violence is pervasive; where too many of our men spend their youth not behind a desk in a classroom, but hanging out on the streets or brooding behind a jail cell.

My job, as President, is to advocate for policies that generate more opportunity for everybody -- policies that strengthen the middle class and give more people the chance to climb their way into the middle class. Policies that create more good jobs and reduce poverty, and educate more children, and give more families the security of health care, and protect more of our children from the horrors of gun violence. That's my job. Those are matters of public policy, and it is important for us all -- black, white and brown -- to advocate for an America where everybody has got a fair shot in life. Not just some. Not just a few.

But along with collective responsibilities, we have individual responsibilities. There are some things, as black men, we can only do for ourselves. There are some things, as Morehouse Men, that you are obliged to do for those still left behind. As Morehouse Men, you now wield something even more powerful than the diploma you're about to collect -- and that's the power of your example.

So what I ask of you today is the same thing I ask of every graduating class I address: Use that power for something larger than yourself. Live up to President Mays's challenge. Be "sensitive to the wrongs, the suffering, and the injustices of society." And be "willing to accept responsibility for correcting (those) ills."

I know that some of you came to Morehouse from communities where life was about keeping your head down and looking out for yourself. Maybe you feel like you escaped, and now you can take your degree and get that fancy job and the nice house and the nice car -- and never look back. And don't let me wrong -- with all those student loans you've had to take out, I know you've got to earn some money. With doors open to you that your parents and grandparents could not even imagine, no one expects you to take a vow of poverty. But I will say it betrays a poverty of ambition if all you think about is what goods you can buy instead of what good you can do. (Applause.)

So, yes, go get that law degree. But if you do, ask yourself if the only option is to defend the rich and the powerful, or if you can also find some time to defend the powerless. Sure, go get your MBA, or start that business. We need black businesses out there. But ask yourselves what broader purpose your business might serve, in putting people to work, or transforming a neighborhood. The most successful CEOs I know didn't start out intent just on making money -- rather, they had a vision of how their product or service would just change things, and the money followed. (Applause.)

Some of you may be headed to medical school to become doctors. But make sure you heal folks in underserved communities who really need it, too. For generations, certain groups in this country -- especially African Americans -- have been desperate in need of access to quality, affordable health care. And as a society, we're finally beginning to change that. Those of you who are under the age of 26 already have the option to stay on your parent's health care plan. But all of you are heading into an economy where many young people expect not only to have multiple jobs, but multiple careers.

So starting October 1st, because of the Affordable Care Act -- otherwise known as Obamacare -- you'll be able to shop for a quality, affordable plan that's yours and travels with you -- a plan that will insure not only your health, but your dreams if you are sick or get in an accident. But we're going to need some doctors to make sure it works, too. We've got to make sure everybody has good health in this country. It's not just good for you, it's good for this country. So you're going to have to spread the word to your fellow young people.

Which brings me to a second point. Just as Morehouse has taught you to expect more of yourselves, inspire those who look up to you to expect more of themselves. We know that too many young men in our community continue to make bad choices. And I have to say, growing up, I made quite a few myself. Sometimes I wrote off my own failings as just another example of the world trying to keep a black man down. I had a tendency sometimes to make excuses for me not doing the right thing. But one of the things that all of you have learned over the last four years is there's no longer any room for excuses. (Applause.)

I understand there's a common fraternity creed here at Morehouse: "Excuses are tools of the incompetent used to build bridges to nowhere and monuments of nothingness." Well, we've got no time for excuses. Not because the bitter legacy of slavery and segregation have vanished entirely; they have not. Not because racism and discrimination no longer exist; we know those are still out there. It's just that in today's hyperconnected, hypercompetitive world, with millions of
young people from China and India and Brazil -- many of whom started with a whole lot less than all of you did -- all of them entering the global workforce alongside you, nobody is going to give you anything that you have not earned. (Applause.)

Nobody cares how tough your upbringing was. Nobody cares if you suffered some discrimination. And moreover, you have to remember that whatever you've gone through, it pales in comparison to the hardships previous generations endured -- and they overcame them. And if they overcame them, you can overcome them, too. (Applause.)

You now hail from a lineage and legacy of immeasurably strong men -- men who bore tremendous burdens and still laid the stones for the path on which we now walk. You wear the mantle of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, and Ralph Abernathy and Thurgood Marshall, and, yes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. These men were many things to many people. And they knew well the role that racism played in their lives. But when it came to their own accomplishments and sense of purpose, they had no time for excuses.

Every one of you have a grandparent or an uncle or a parent who's told you that at some point in life, as an African American, you have to work twice as hard as anyone else if you want to get by. I think President Mays put it even better: He said, "Whatever you do, strive to do it so well that no man living and no man dead, and no man yet to be born can do it any better." (Applause.)

And I promise you, what was needed in Dr. Mays's time, that spirit of excellence, and hard work, and dedication, and no excuses is needed now more than ever. If you think you can just get over in this economy just because you have a Morehouse degree, you're in for a rude awakening. But if you stay hungry, if you keep hustling, if you keep on your grind and get other folks to do the same -- nobody can stop you. (Applause.)

And when I talk about pursuing excellence and setting an example, I'm not just talking about in your professional life. One of today's graduates, Frederick Anderson -- where's Frederick? Frederick, right here. (Applause.) I know it's raining, but I'm going to tell about Frederick. Frederick started his college career in Ohio, only to find out that his high school sweetheart back in Georgia was pregnant. So he came back and enrolled in Morehouse to be closer to her. Pretty soon, helping raise a newborn and working night shifts became too much, so he started taking business classes at a technical college instead -- doing everything from delivering newspapers to buffing hospital floors to support his family.

And then he enrolled at Morehouse a second time. But even with a job, he couldn't keep up with the cost of tuition. So after getting his degree from that technical school, this father of three decided to come back to Morehouse for a third time. (Applause.) As Frederick says, "God has a plan for my life, and He's not done with me yet."

And today, Frederick is a family man, and a working man, and a Morehouse Man. (Applause.) And that's what I'm asking all of you to do: Keep setting an example for what it means to be a man. (Applause.) Be the best husband to your wife, or you're your boyfriend, or your partner. Be the best father you can be to your children. Because nothing is more important.

I was raised by a heroic single mom, wonderful grandparents -- made incredible sacrifices for me. And I know there are moms and grandparents here today who did the same thing for all of you. But I sure wish I had had a father who was not only present, but involved.

Didn't know my dad, and so my whole life, I've tried to be for Michelle and my girls what my father was not for my mother and me. I want to break that cycle where a father is not at home -- (applause)

-- where a father is not helping to raise that son or daughter. I want to be a better father, a better husband, a better man.

It's hard work that demands your constant attention and frequent sacrifice. And I promise you, Michelle will tell you I'm not perfect. She's got a long list of my imperfections. (Laughter.) Even now, I'm still practicing, I'm still learning, still getting corrected in terms of how to be a fine husband and a good father. But I will tell you this: Everything else is unfulfilled if we fail at family, if we fail at that responsibility. (Applause.)

I know that when I am on my deathbed someday, I will not be thinking about any particular legislation I passed; I will not be thinking about a policy I promoted; I will not be thinking about the speech I gave, I will not be thinking the Nobel Prize I received. I will be thinking about that walk I took with my daughters. I'll be thinking about a lazy afternoon with my wife. I'll be thinking about sitting around the dinner table and seeing them happy and healthy and knowing that they were loved. And I'll be thinking about whether I did right by all of you, right by all of them.

So be a good role model, set a good example for that young brother coming up. If you know somebody who's not on point, go back and bring that brother along -- those who've been left behind, who haven't had the same opportunities we have -- they need to hear from you. You've got to be engaged on the barbershops, on the basketball court, at church, spend time and energy and presence to give people opportunities and a chance. Pull them up, expose them, support their dreams. Don't put them down.

We've got to teach them just like what we have to learn, what it means to be a man -- to serve your city like Maynard Jackson; to shape the culture like Spike Lee; to be like Chester Davenport, one of the first people to integrate the University of Georgia Law School. When he got there, nobody would sit next to him in class. But Chester didn't mind. Later on, he said, "It was the thing for me to do. Someone needed to be the first." And today, Chester is here celebrating his 50th reunion. Where is Chester Davenport? He's here. (Applause.)

So if you've had role models, fathers, brothers like that -- thank them today. And if you haven't, commit yourself to being that man to somebody else.

And finally, as you do these things, do them not just for yourself, but don't even do them just for the African American community. I want you to set your sights higher. At the turn of the last century, W.E.B. DuBois spoke about the "talented tenth" -- a class of highly educated, socially conscious leaders in the black community. But it's not just the African American community that needs you. The country needs you. The world needs you.

As Morehouse Man, many of you know what it's like to be an outsider; know what it's like to be marginalized; know what it's like to feel the sting of discrimination. And that's an experience that a lot of Americans share. Hispanic Americans know that feeling when somebody asks them where they come from or tell them to go back. Gay and lesbian Americans feel it when a stranger passes judgment on their parenting skills or the love that they share. Muslim Americans feel it when they're stared at with suspicion because of their faith. Any woman who knows the injustice of earning less pay for doing the same work -- she knows what it's like to be on the outside looking in.

So your experiences give you special insight that today's leaders need. If you tap into that experience, it should endow you with empathy -- the understanding of what it's like to walk in somebody else's shoes, to see through their eyes, to know what it's like when you're not born on 3rd base, thinking you hit a triple. It should give you the ability to connect. It should give you a sense of compassion and what it means to overcome barriers.

And I will tell you, Class of 2013, whatever success I have achieved, whatever positions of leadership I have held have depended less on Ivy League degrees or
SAT scores or GPAs, and have instead been due to that sense of connection and empathy -- the special obligation I felt, as a black man like you, to help those who need it most, people who didn't have the opportunities that I had -- because there but for the grace of God, go I -- I might have been in their shoes. I might have been in prison. I might have been unemployed. I might not have been able to support a family. And that motivates me. (Applause.)

So it's up to you to widen your circle of concern -- to care about justice for everybody, white, black and brown. Everybody. Not just in your own community, but also across this country and around the world. To make sure everyone has a voice, and everybody gets a seat at the table; that everybody, no matter what you look like or where you come from, what your last name is -- it doesn't matter, everybody gets a chance to walk through those doors of opportunity if they are willing to work hard enough.

When Leland Shelton was four years old -- where's Leland? (Applause.) Stand up, Leland. When Leland Shelton was four years old, social services took him away from his mama, put him in the care of his grandparents. By age 14, he was in the foster care system. Three years after that, Leland enrolled in Morehouse. And today he is graduating Phi Beta Kappa on his way to Harvard Law School. (Applause.) But he's not stopping there. As a member of the National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council, he plans to use his law degree to make sure kids like him don't fall through the cracks. And it won't matter whether they're black kids or brown kids or white kids or Native American kids, because he'll understand what they're going through. And he'll be fighting for them. He'll be in their corner. That's leadership. That's a Morehouse Man right there. (Applause.)

That's what we've come to expect from you, Morehouse -- a legacy of leaders -- not just in our black community, but for the entire American community. To recognize the burdens you carry with you, but to resist the temptation to use them as excuses. To transform the way we think about manhood, and set higher standards for ourselves and for others. To be successful, but also to understand that each of us has responsibilities not just to ourselves, but to one another and to future generations. Men who refuse to be afraid.

Members of the Class of 2013, you are heirs to a great legacy. You have within you that same courage and that same strength, the same resolve as the men who came before you. That's what being a Morehouse Man is all about. That's what being an American is all about.

Success may not come quickly or easily. But if you strive to do what's right, if you work harder and dream bigger, if you set an example in your own lives and do your part to help meet the challenges of our time, then I'm confident that, together, we will continue the never-ending task of perfecting our union.


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Law library wins photo contest

Authored on May 23, 2011 - 2:58pm by crice
Last updated on May 23, 2011 - 2:58pm by crice

Congratulations to members of the Alexander Campbell King Law Library for taking home one first place and two second place prizes in the 2011 American Association of Law Libraries Day in the Life Photo Contest. To view the winning entries, please visit www.aallnet.org/home-page-contents/newscallout/2011-day-in-the-life-winners.

More Top News
Search committee named to seek UGA senior vice president for academic affairs and provost

May 23, 2013

Print

Writer:
Sam Fahmy

Contact:
Kathy Pharr

Athens, Ga. - University of Georgia President-elect Jere Morehead has appointed a search committee to begin a national search for the university's next senior vice president for academic affairs and provost.

William Gray Potter, university librarian and associate provost, will chair the committee, which is composed of faculty, staff, administrators, students and alumni.

"As the university's sole senior vice president, the next provost will play a central role in guiding the teaching, research and service mission of the university," Morehead said. "I am grateful to Dr. Potter for agreeing to chair this search committee and to the faculty, staff and students who will play an integral role in this process."

The search committee members are:
• Nicholas Allen, Franklin Professor of English and director of the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts;
• Michelle Barton, Fuller Callaway Endowed Chair and Meigs Professor, College of Veterinary Medicine;
• Lonnie Brown, Cleveland Distinguished Chair of Legal Ethics and Professionalism, School of Law;
• Jean Chin, executive director of University Health Center, Division of Student Affairs;
• Celeste Condit, Distinguished Research Professor of Communication Studies, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences;
• Phaedra Corso, professor, College of Public Health, and director of the Economic Evaluation Research Group;
• Sarah Covert, professor and associate dean of academic affairs, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources;
• Stephen Dalton, professor and Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar in Molecular Cell Biology, and director of the Center for Molecular Medicine;
• Jerry Daniel, IT professional, department of mathematics, and chair of the Staff Council;
• J. Griffin Doyle, vice president for government relations;
• Silvia Giraudo, associate professor, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, and chair of University Council;
• Loch Johnson, Regents and Meigs Professor of Public and International Affairs, School of Public and International Affairs;
• Craig H. Kennedy, dean of the College of Education;
• Austin Laufersweiler, president of Student Government Association;
• Laura Meadows, director of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government;
• Daniel Nadenicek, dean of the College of Environment and Design;
• Annette B. Poulsen, Sterne Professor of Banking and Finance, Terry College of Business;
• Gregory H. Robinson, UGA Foundation Distinguished Professor in Chemistry;
• Krunal Shah, president of the Graduate Student Association;
Search committee named to seek UGA senior vice president for acad...

J. Marshall Shepherd, Georgia Athletic Association Professor in the Social Sciences and director of the Atmospheric Sciences Program; 
John Spalding, incoming chair of the UGA Foundation; and 
Steven Stice, GRA Eminent Scholar in animal and dairy science, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and director of the Regenerative Bioscience Center.

Morehead said the committee will begin its work in the coming weeks with the goal of completing the search before the end of fall semester. The search committee will be assisted by the firm Heidrick and Struggles International Inc. Kathy Pharr, chief of staff to the incoming president, will provide internal support to the committee.

Morehead has served as provost since 2010. In February he was chosen by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents to be UGA's 22nd president, effective July 1.

As the chief academic officer of the University of Georgia, the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost oversees instruction, research, public service and outreach, student affairs and information technology. The vice presidents of these five areas report to the provost, as do the deans of UGA's 17 schools and colleges as well as the campus dean of the Georgia Regents University/UGA Medical Partnership. Associate provosts for academic fiscal affairs, academic planning, academic programs, the Honors program, institutional diversity, international education and the libraries also report to the provost, as does the vice provost for academic affairs. For more information, see http://provost.uga.edu/.

Filed under: Culture / Living, Education, University News, Appointments, Search Committees.
Search committee named to seek new UGA provost

Story Comments Image (1)

Published: Thursday, May 23, 2013 8:39 pm

UGA News Service | 0 comments

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HEADLINE: Aaron's Names Robert W. Kamerschen Senior Vice President and General Counsel

BODY:

New Delhi, May 23 -- Aaron's, Inc. (NYSE: AAN), a lease-to-own retailer specializing in the sales and lease ownership of residential furniture, consumer electronics, home appliances and accessories, announced today Robert W. Kamerschen has joined the Company as Senior Vice President and General Counsel.

Kamerschen will be responsible for managing all legal and governmental affairs for Aaron's, including employment law, regulatory matters, intellectual property, litigation, vendor relationships, financings, acquisitions, and other general legal matters. As General Counsel, he will report directly to Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Ronald W. Allen.

"Robbie has a lengthy career in corporate governance and has been recognized as one of Georgia's leading attorneys," said Allen. "We're confident that his extensive experience in corporate legal counsel and regulatory affairs will be a tremendous asset to Aaron's."

In 2012, both the Fulton County Daily Report and Georgia Trend magazine recognized Kamerschen for his legal work. The Fulton County Daily Report named Equifax's legal department, led by Kamerschen, the "Legal Department of the Year" and he was included in Georgia Trend's "Legal Elite" list.

Prior to joining Aaron's, Kamerschen served at Equifax since 2008 as the U.S. Chief Counsel, Senior Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer. He was responsible for the management of the U.S. legal function, compliance, and governmental relations. Before that, he served as Vice President of Law and Public Policy at ChoicePoint. Earlier in his career, he was General Counsel to EzGov and practiced law in the Atlanta office of Troutman Sanders LLP. At Troutman Sanders, Kamerschen's practice focused on regulatory law and litigation.

Before attending law school, Kamerschen worked on Capitol Hill for U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby (AL) and played minor league baseball in the Philadelphia Phillies organization. He is a graduate of Stanford University and an honors graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law.
MARLENA - County Chairman Tim Lee wants the Board of Commissioners on Tuesday to approve Assistant County Attorney Deborah Dance as the new county attorney.

Dance, who is paid a salary of $118,412, would replace Dorothy Bishop, who retired as county attorney in December with a salary of $160,850.

With a staff of eight attorneys and three legal assistants, and an annual budget of more than $1.8 million, the county attorney's office, along with outside counsel, represents and provides legal counsel to all departments of county government, the five-member Board of Commissioners, and other elected and appointed Cobb County officials, including the sheriff; county police department, the tax commissioner; tax assessor; Superior Court clerk; and State Court judges, clerks, and administrative staff, county spokesman Robert Quigley said.

Dance has served as assistant county attorney since 2001. She has worked for the county since 1995, serving as staff attorney, associate attorney and senior associate attorney. Prior to that, she was a magistrate judge in Oconee County.

"We opened it up to everybody, and we got a lot of good quality candidates that applied for the position," Lee said. "In the end, when we went through the process of evaluation of human resources with the committee, she was found to have and was recommended to me as having the best overall capabilities and skills necessary to take the department to the next level in the future."

There were 55 applications received for the job with 31 of those referred to a selection committee made up of Col. Don Bartlett with the Cobb Sheriff’s Office, Capt. Brian Batterson with Cobb Police; Faye DiMassimo, director of the Cobb Department of Transportation; Cobb State Court Judge Irma Glover; Rob Hosack, community development director; District Attorney Vic Reynolds; and Glenn Stephens, who as administrator and former county attorney for Gwinnett County serves in the role that David Hankerson does as county manager for Cobb.
Dance grew up in South Carolina just across the Savannah River from Augusta, and later outside of Chicago. She graduated from the University of Georgia Law School in 1989.

She lives in Kennesaw with her husband, Jeff Johnson. The couple has two sons: Robert Johnson, a rising junior at Georgia Tech, and William Johnson, a rising junior at Kell High School. They attend Briarcliff United Methodist Church in Atlanta.

"I'm honored to be recommended and excited about the opportunity to be of continued service to the county and Board of Commissioners," Dance said.
W. Hale Barrett, former managing partner of Hull Barrett law firm, dies...  

By Travis Highfield  
Staff Writer  
Saturday, May 25, 2013 9:12 PM  
Last updated Sunday, May 26, 2013 1:39 AM  

William Hale Barrett, the longtime former managing partner of one of Augusta's largest law firms, died Saturday. Barrett, of the Hull Barrett law firm, was 84. Neal Dickert, an attorney with the firm, said he had been in ill health for months.

Born on Feb. 11, 1929, Barrett received his bachelor's degree in commerce from Washington & Lee University in 1950. He then went on to earn his Bachelor of Laws from the University of Georgia in 1955. That year, Barrett joined Hull Barrett, PC, the company his grandfather founded in 1916.

Barrett held memberships with the American Bar Association and the Augusta Bar Association, serving as the president of the latter in 1973. He served as the chairman of the corporate and banking section of the State Bar of Georgia from 1975 to 1976. The Augusta native also was a member of Augusta National Golf Club.

Barrett served as corporate counsel to many Augusta-area businesses, leading him to be recognized in Best Lawyers in America in the field of corporate law for 15 consecutive years, according to the firm's Web site.

Dickert said Barrett had a great legal mind and was often sought out by others in the business for his advice.

"He was incredibly bright," Dickert said. "He was always very understated in his personality and let his actions speak for himself. He had the knowledge, experience and intelligence, coupled with a mild-mannered personality that was always in control. A dignified man."

Back to Top
Plenty of local attorneys enjoy locally made beer, but three litigators are making a business of knowing their breweries. Hayley Wells, Derek Allen and Norman Leonard were doing so much brewery-related business at their office of Ward and Smith, P.A., the firm decided to create its own alcoholic beverage law practice group.

Their goal is to help business owners navigate a maze of local, state and federal rules and regulations that govern the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages. It's a side of the business that often gets overlooked, the three said.

"Very few people get into craft brewing to make money. They're all artists first, and we love them," Allen said.

"But they're about the art of it first, so they don't necessarily think about the business of it, so sometimes they get into trouble, unwittingly, with naming or their zoning use or whatever," he said. "We're here to help with that."

This week, the city is celebrating its second annual Asheville Beer Week with an array of events, from dinners and tastings to a daylong bash, the Beer City Festival, Saturday on Pack Square Park. But behind the fun and fraternity of the finished product, there are hours of hard work and careful thought put into running a small craft brewery.

"I think one of the biggest challenges that new craft breweries face is around trademarks to make sure you have your name protected," said Adam Charnack, a co-owner of new Asheville brewery, Hi-Wire Brewing, on the verge of opening on Hilliard Avenue.

"It's difficult because you have to find the right balance, because it can be expensive," said Charnack, who had a friend advise him. "But it can also save you a lot of money on the other end with something that can have severe ramifications."

Booming business
The beer business been steadily picking up steam in Asheville since Highland Brewing opened 18 years ago and owner Oscar Wong set the tone for quality drink.

Last year, the craft beer scene exploded with the announcements that three brewers with national profiles would build beer-making operations in Western North Carolina: New Belgium Brewing and Oskar Blues Brewery, both based in Colorado, announced they would open East Coast operations in Asheville and Brevard, respectively, while Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. announced it would open a brewery in Mills River, just south of Asheville.

Oskar Blues is up and running, while New Belgium's brewery is scheduled to open in 2015. Sierra Nevada is on track to be making beer in Henderson County later this year.

In the meantime, the craft beer scene in Buncombe County continues to boil, with 14 breweries, from small operations known as "nano-breweries" to Highland, which distributes its beers up and down the East Coast. At least three more are on the verge of opening, and other makers of craft alcoholic beverages such as hard cider and sake are popping up.

The local trends follow a national upswing. The craft brewing industry grew 15 percent by volume and 17 percent by dollars in 2012, according to the national Brewers Association. Craft brewers sold an estimated 13,235,917 barrels of beer in 2012, up from 11,467,337 in 2011, and the craft brewer retail dollar value in 2012 was an estimated $10.2 billion, up from $8.7 billion in 2011, according to the association.

That all translates to a lot of questions, paperwork and potential litigation for Wells, Allen and Leonard, who each bring their own expertise to the industry.

"I advise clients on a lot of employment and compliance issues with the state's Alcoholic Law Enforcement and Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission folks, who sometimes like to enforce with not much rhyme or reason," Wells said.

"But we have open lines of communication with the commission, so we're able to get quick answers for our clients, whether its a distribution issue or questions about employees drinking in a tasting room," she said.

Allen has deep experience in zoning and permitting issues, while Leonard knows intellectual property law. Wells, Allen and Leonard are also experienced litigators. Ward and Smith, a full-service firm founded in New Bern in 1895, has offices in Greenville, Raleigh and Wilmington, as well.

Knowing the brew rules

Anne-Fitten Glenn, a spokeswoman for Oskar Blues Brewery, a client of Ward and Smith's, said the attorneys were valuable in helping the Colorado-based brewery get up to speed on North Carolina laws.

"Being a brewery heretofore only open in Colorado, the laws were all different in North Carolina, from how you run your taproom to what has to be on your growler label," Glenn said.

For example, one big issue just before Oskar Blues opened its Brevard tasting room last year was retraining brewers to comply with North Carolina law about drinking in the taproom.

"In Colorado, our brewers were used to going behind the bar and serving themselves, because it's their beer, they made it," and it was legal, Glenn said. "In North Carolina, that is illegal and can get you into big trouble."

Having Ward and Smith on board to answer questions was "very helpful," she said.
The area of intellectual property rights, as Charnack of Hi-Wire Brewing noted, can be laced with landmines for new brewery owners. Leonard said there's often "an emotional investment" that comes with brewers and the name of their breweries and beer.

"If you've invested a lot of emotion, time and money into marketing and building a reputation for your brew and you suddenly have to change that, it could be the death of your brand," Leonard said. "That's a really hard thing to come back from."

New craft beer laws, and changes to existing ones, are also a hot topic.

Wells said two changes working their way through the N.C. General Assembly have been getting attention. One bill would allow retailers such as grocery stores and beer specialty shops to fill growlers from a beer tap, just as craft breweries can.

Another would allow in-stand beer sales at professional sporting events.

As the law stands now, only the Carolina Panthers can offer beer sales from vendors walking the aisles. That's because of a cap limiting it those sales to stadiums that seat 60,000 people. The new bill would lower that cap.

Still another bill would increase the size of breweries that are allowed to self-distribute the beer they make.

It's a hot line of work for the three attorneys, who are also unabashed fans of locally made craft beer.

Leonard is a 15-year homebrewer, while Wells and Allen can't get enough of the Asheville brewery scene.

"The brewers get that we are passionate about craft beer," said Allen, a regular at Green Man Brewing, which is a client.

"I think they choose to work with us because we're craft beer lovers who also happen to be lawyers."

Alehouse attorneys

The Asheville office of Ward and Smith, P.A., has carved out an alcoholic beverage law practice group in its firm. The trio of practice group attorneys includes:

- Hayley Wells: specializes in labor and employment law; she advises clients on issues including employment discrimination, wrongful discharge and harassment. She earned her law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law.

- Derek Allen: specializes in zoning and land use needs; he primarily practices in the area of government relations with representation of craft brewers and distillers in permitting, regulatory and trade issues. He earned his law degree from the University of North Carolina School of Law.

- Norman Leonard: specializes in intellectual property rights issues; his practice also covers a range of contract, loan and settlement issues. He earned his law degree from the Elon University School of Law.

LOAD-DATE: May 27, 2013
AUGUSTA, Ga. - Hale Barrett, 84, died at home on Friday, May 24, 2013. A memorial service will be held on Tuesday, May 28, at 2:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, where he was a lifelong member and former Chancellor.

Hale was the son of Cecilia Baker Barrett and George Barnes Barrett. He is survived by Lelia Banks DuPr, his wife of 58 years; their children, George Barnes Barrett (Diane), Anderson DuPr Barrett (Jane) and Susan DuPr Barrett; grandchildren, Olivia Britton Barrett, Susan Sloan Barrett, Wm. Hale Barrett, Ezra Banks Barrett and Jack Anderson Barrett; his sisters, Mary Barrett Robertson and Katherine Barrett Murphy (Kingsley); and several nieces and nephews.

He was a graduate of Richmond Academy, Washington & Lee University and the University of Georgia School of Law, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude and was elected a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He practiced law for more than 59 years at the firm of Hull Barrett, PC representing numerous clients, including Castleberry's Food Company, Chipman-Union, Inc., Merry Land & Investment Company, Morris Communications Company, LLC and Sea Pines Company. He was a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation and served as Chairman of the Committee which rewrote the Georgia Corporate Code.

He was a member of the Augusta National Golf Club. He also was a member of numerous civic organizations and a veteran of the U. S. Army.

If desired, in lieu of food or flowers, memorials may be made to Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy, 1858 Lock and Dam Road, Augusta, Georgia 30906 or St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 605 Reynolds Street, Augusta, Georgia 30901.

The family would like to express their sincere gratitude to Jill Curd, Florence Mealing and the many other people who have been so helpful.

The Augusta Chronicle - Tuesday, May 28, 2013

GRAPHIC: Barrett mug
Jere Morehead, new UGA President

It's easier for people who don't know Jere Morehead to get the impression that he's entirely focused on his work at the University of Georgia.

Even Morehead admits that it's fair to say UGA is not just work, but a hobby.

Morehead is no drudge, though, say those who know him well.
Athens welcomes new UGA president

“I’d like people to know that Jere Morehead has a superb sense of humor. I’m not sure that always comes across. He’s a funny guy,” said Paul Kurtz, an associate dean in UGA’s School of Law.

“He sees the humor in life. He’s a good observer of things and he’s witty,” said longtime friend Julie Carnes, chief judge in Atlanta’s Northern District U.S. District Court.

Morehead can be sly, said Mark Lewis, an NCAA vice president and a former Morehead student.

He would sometimes ask students with a straight face if they knew that the time for a class had been changed, and they were late, when in fact it had not been, Lewis recalled.

“He’s always got something up his sleeve,” he said. “You’ve got to always be on your guard with him.”

Morehead can also show a little patience and understanding, Lewis said.

When Lewis and his teammates in the UGA School of Law won UGA’s first moot court NCAA national championship, the students ate breakfast at McDonald’s their first successful day. One of Lewis’ teammates, he didn’t say who, decided it would jinx the team if they didn’t continue eating at the Golden Arches.

“He is not a McDonald’s aficionado,” Lewis said of Morehead, the moot court team’s coach. “He tried very hard not to go to McDonald’s. It drove him nuts that we had prepared hundreds of hours for this success. For a man of his intellect to have superstition enter in was hard.”

Morehead met them at McDonald’s, though they had to bring in his breakfast from elsewhere, Lewis said.

“He wasn’t going to mess with the mojo,” Lewis said.

Morehead admits to watching a lot of sports; he’s a frequent spectator at UGA football games and other UGA competitions.

An avid reader, he counts Doris Kearns Goodwin and David McCullough among his favorite authors. He likes historical biographies like Goodwin’s “Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln” and McCullough’s “John Adams.”

For vacations, the unmarried Morehead likes going to the beach with his extended family, most often to Hilton Head or St. Simons Island.

And for beach reading, he’s partial to novelist Pat Conroy, whose books include “The Water is Wide,” “Prince of Tides” and “The Great Santini.”

When Morehead watches television, he mostly flips from news channel to news channel, though he does admit to having a favorite TV entertainment show.

“I became addicted to ‘Homeland’ like a number of friends,” he said.

Tags: featured, full-image

Category: People

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Handy gadgets to make your Athens summer sweet »
Augusta lawyer Brian Epps selected as federal magistrate judge

By Sandy Hodson
Staff Writer
Wednesday, May 29, 2013 7:24 PM
Last updated Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:02 PM

Augusta lawyer Brian Epps has been selected as a federal court magistrate judge.

The federal district court judges of the Southern District of Georgia chose Epps from several highly qualified candidates, Chief Judge Lisa Godbey Wood said.

Epps' affinity for hard work, intelligence and integrity drew the judges to the 40-year-old partner of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton in Augusta, she said.

Epps will serve as one of four magistrate judges in the Southern District.

The judges are responsible for conducting preliminary criminal matters, such as setting bonds, and for pretrial issues in civil cases.

Wood said the magistrate judges also may preside over civil trials if all of the parties agree.

The magistrates serve eight-year terms.

Epps is replacing Magistrate Judge W. Leon Barfield, whose work on the federal bench for 20 years provides a terrific role model, Wood said.

After graduating cum laude from the University of Georgia, Epps earned his law degree at the university's school of law, where he was on the Georgia Law Review.

He passed the bar in 1999 and became a clerk for U.S. District Court Judge Richard W. Story of the Northern District of Georgia, who will attend Epps' swearing-in ceremony.

After his clerkship, Epps worked for an Atlanta law office for two years before returning home to Augusta, he said.

At Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton, Epps specializes in insurance litigation.

Epps has been active professionally and in his community and church, Aldersgate United Methodist.

He and his wife, Amy, have an 11-year-old daughter and a 5-year-old son.

Epps will be sworn in at 10 a.m. June 6 at a formal investiture ceremony at the federal courthouse at Telfair and Ninth streets in Augusta.
Georgia Supreme Court, The State of Georgia has issued the following news release:

Chief Judge David R. Sweat of the Western Judicial Circuit has been designated to serve in place of Justice Keith Blackwell in the appeal of Roesser v. The State (S12G1846). The Supreme Court of Georgia will hear arguments in the case on Monday, June 3 during its 10:00 A.M. session. In this Gwinnett County case, a man who was acquitted of murder is appealing a Georgia Court of Appeals ruling that he can be retried on the charge of voluntary manslaughter, which he contends would be double jeopardy. In addition to hearing arguments, Judge Sweat will participate in the Court's decision.

Chief Judge Sweat, 58, was elected as Superior Court Judge in 2002 in Athens-Clarke County in an open-seat election. As a judge, he spearheaded creation of a Treatment and Accountability Court, which diverts from jail into treatment individuals involved in the criminal justice system due to mental illness. From 1979 until his election as judge, Judge Sweat practiced law in the Athens area, focusing on employment and labor law, personal injury, workers' compensation, and complex litigation in federal and state courts. For 15 of those years, he was a law partner with his wife, Kay Giese, whom he met in law school, and who later was appointed Judge of the Athens-Clarke County Municipal Court. As a lawyer, Judge Sweat frequently assisted nonprofit organizations, including the Athens International Little League, the Athens Neighborhood Health Center, the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia, and the AIDS Coalition of Northeast Georgia.

Chief Judge Sweat is a member of the Council of Superior Court Judges and chairs the Uniform Rules Committee, which develops rules that govern Georgia's trial courts. He also serves on the council's Accountability Courts Committee. Judge Sweat recently drafted enabling legislation for mental health courts, which was ultimately passed by the Georgia legislature.

Chief Judge Sweat grew up in the Augusta area, earned his B.A. degree from what is today Augusta State University, and his law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law. He and his wife have been married 31 years and have two adult children.
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LOAD-DATE: May 31, 2013

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St. Louis American
May 2013

SECTION: EDITORIALS

LENGTH: 700 words

HEADLINE: Obama's 'no excuses' message

BODY:

Commencement season is a time for praise, applause and even self-congratulation, which is why we appreciate President Barack Obama for including some tough love and direct challenges to the Class of 2013 at Morehouse College in Atlanta, who were fortunate to have the leader of the nation as their commencement speaker - even if he told them some things they maybe did not wish to hear on such a joyous occasion. While Obama's "no excuses" message is seen by some as pandering to whites by lecturing to black audiences, the president rightly tempered his praise and encouragement with challenge.

"There are some things, as black men, we can only do for ourselves," Obama told the youth. "There are some things, as Morehouse Men, that you are obliged to do for those still left behind. As Morehouse Men, you now wield something even more powerful than the diploma you're about to collect - and that's the power of your example."

Obama was anything but vague. He went down a list of desirable professions these young men are gearing up to pursue and told them what their responsibilities will be when they get there. Lawyers, he said, must "find some time to defend the powerless." Businessmen must ask themselves "what broader purpose your business might serve, in putting people to work or transforming a neighborhood." Doctors must "heal folks in underserved communities who really need it."

It's not all about you and the money you hope to make, the president challenged them. He also knew that was not exactly what they were hoping to hear from him.

"I know that some of you came to Morehouse from communities where life was about keeping your head down and looking out for yourself. Maybe you feel like you escaped, and now you can take your degree and get that fancy job and the nice house and the nice car - and never look back," Obama told them. He understands that. "With doors open to you that your parents and grandparents could not even imagine, no one expects you to take a vow of poverty," he said. "But I will say it betrays a poverty of ambition if all you think about is what goods you can buy instead of what good you can do."
Obama named a few black men who have demonstrated, not "a poverty of ambition" but a wealth of it: Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson; filmmaker Spike Lee; and Chester Davenport, one of the first people to integrate the University of Georgia Law School.

Columnist Cynthia Tucker has since praised one of the graduates in Obama’s audience, Genarlow Wilson, who was imprisoned for statutory rape after having consensual sex with a 15-year-old when he was only 17 and went on to get his education while giving lecture tours to teens on alcohol, drugs and sexual responsibility.

We think of Newark Mayor Cory Booker, another busy speaker this commencement season, who took his elite degrees from Stanford University and Yale Law School to Oxford, England as a Rhodes Scholar before going home, moving into public housing and starting a daring grassroots campaign for mayor of his home city.

We think of our friend St. Louis Juvenile Court Judge Jimmie Edwards. Judge Edwards grew frustrated at only seeing our youth - so very many of them black boys and young black men - when they are already ensnared by the criminal justice system. Judge Edwards built a team to open Innovative Concept Academy in an effort to reach this struggling population before public schools have given up on them or they have dropped out. The brainchild of Judge Edwards, Innovative Concept Academy was founded in 2009 for at-risk juveniles expelled from the city’s public schools or who were on parole. It is the only school in America overseen by a court system dedicated to the education and rehabilitation of delinquent teens. This is precisely the kind of community leadership that Obama challenged the Morehouse Men to put on their agendas.

"Nobody cares how tough your upbringing was," Obama told the young men.
"Nobody cares if you suffered some discrimination. And moreover, you have to remember that whatever you've gone through, it pales in comparison to the hardships previous generations endured - and they overcame them. And if they overcame them, you can overcome them, too."

GRAPHIC: Obama's 'no excuses' message President Barack Obama gave the commencement speech to the Class of 2013 at Morehouse College in Atlanta on May 19.
Fulton State Court Judge Forsling stepping down

3:30 pm, May 31st, 2013

Fulton County State Court Judge Susan Forsling submitted her resignation to Gov. Nathan Deal on Friday.

"After prayerful consideration," wrote Forsling, "I hereby tender my resignation as judge of the State Court of Fulton County effective upon the close of business July 1, 2013."

"I've been with Fulton County exactly 33 years," said Forsling in an interview. The judge signed on with the county attorney's office July 1, 1980. "I've been on the bench for almost 16 years, and I'm ready for a new stage."

Her letter asked the governor to appoint Forsling to senior status following her resignation so that she could continue hear cases in the superior court as needed, and she said she was considering pursuing a mediation practice.

"I also want to pursue my ministry," said Forsling, who teaches Bible study at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, and is preparing for her fifth trip abroad as part of a prison ministry that has taken her to Thailand and Kenya over the past few years.

Forsling, 57, was appointed to the bench by Gov. Zell Miller in 1997; a University of Georgia law school graduate, she is married to Schreeder, Wheeler & Flint partner Mark Forsling.

Forsling, who was in the news last year when her longtime case manager was discovered to have stashed thousands of court files and documents in his office and elsewhere over more than a decade, said she had been considering the move for some time.

"Nothing brought it on except time," said Forsling. "I maxed out on my pension several years ago, and I'm just ready to do other things."
Others graduated from law school with Hale Barrett. But few would dispute he was in a class by himself.

"Hale was the best lawyer most of us have ever known," colleague Pat Rice wrote of him this week. "His intellect and scope of knowledge from the seldom-visited, far-away corners of corporate law to the unimaginable, unsuspected twists and turns and illogic of the internal revenue code were at his fingertips.

"He possessed more wisdom and judgment than anyone I have ever encountered in life or in literature."

If given the opportunity to map out your best life in advance, you could scarcely have charted a more honorable or impactful course than Hale Barrett's life took.

Augustan and Georgian through and through, he graduated Richmond Academy and, ultimately, the University of Georgia School of Law - before joining the Hull Barrett law firm in 1955 that his grandfather had started in 1916. After serving in the U.S. Army, he practiced law at the firm for 59 years, helping shepherd some of this region's major and most important businesses through growth, and through the murky waters of law and real estate in good times and bad.

"The business and commercial history of the Augusta region for the last 50 years bears the imprint of the legal talent and wise counsel that Hale provided to his clients," colleague David Hudson wrote to us.

Those clients are a veritable Who's Who in Augusta and beyond. And so are the beneficiaries of his civic works. He was also a chancellor at his beloved St. Paul's Episcopal church downtown.

It's not just what course he took in life; it's how he did it. He did it with uncommon humility, grace, kindness, humor and an unrelenting sense of wonderment. And he never seemed to think about what was in it for him, eschewing both gratuity and gratuitous praise.
"Hale Barrett was never motivated by personal recognition or gain," Hudson wrote.

The main word that has kept popping up about Hale Barrett in the days since his passing last Friday at 84 is "integrity"—though Rice is quick to add "wise" and "ethical."

Good communities don't rise up from the landscape out of happenstance. They're made to happen, by the steady hand and upright acts of good people. A great city is the accumulation of such people and their labors. Hale Barrett helped make this a great city.

Every life has value. The best lives add value to those around them. He was such a man.

LOAD-DATE: June 1, 2013

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May 30, 2013 Thursday 4:29 AM EST

LENGTH: 467 words

HEADLINE: Superior Court Chief Judge Sweat to Hear Georgia Supreme Court Case

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

DATELINE: ATHENS, Ga.

BODY:

The Athens-Clarke County Unified Government issued the following news release:

Chief Judge David R. Sweat of the Western Judicial Circuit has been designated to serve in place of Justice Keith Blackwell in the appeal of Roesser v. The State (S12G1846). The Supreme Court of Georgia will hear arguments in the case on Monday, June 3 during its 10:00 a.m. session.

In this Gwinnet County case, a man who was acquitted of murder is appealing a Georgia Court of Appeals ruling that he can be retried on the charge of voluntary manslaughter, which he contends would be double jeopardy. In addition to hearing arguments, Judge Sweat will participate in the Court's decision.

Chief Judge Sweat, 58, was elected as Superior Court Judge in 2002 in Athens-Clarke County in an open-seat election. As a judge, he spearheaded creation of a Treatment and Accountability Court, which diverts from jail into treatment individuals involved in the criminal justice system due to mental illness.

From 1979 until his election as judge, Judge Sweat practiced law in the Athens area, focusing on employment and labor law, personal injury, workers'
compensation, and complex litigation in federal and state courts. For 15 of those years, he was a law partner with his
wife, Kay Giese, whom he met in law school, and who later was appointed Judge of the Athens-Clarke County Municipal
Court. As a lawyer, Judge Sweat frequently assisted nonprofit organizations, including the Athens International Little
League, the Athens Neighborhood Health Center, the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia, and the AIDS Coalition of
Northeast Georgia.

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develops rules that govern Georgia's trial courts. He also serves on the council's Accountability Courts Committee.
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For more information about the Supreme Court of Georgia, contact Jane Hansen, Public Information Officer, at 404-
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