

PRESENT THE

Council for Quality Growth's  
2024 FOUR PILLAR TRIBUTE

HONORING

— *the legacy of* —

HERMAN J. RUSSELL SR.  
& THE RUSSELL FAMILY

PURE GRIT  
BUILT TO LAST

2024 TRIBUTE CHAIRS

Jay Bailey	Cynthia Jones-Parks
Leona Barr-Davenport	Keith Mason
Dan T. Cathy	Dave Moody
Cynthia Day	Egbert Perry
David Eidson	Sylvia Russell
Ernest Greer	T. Dallas Smith
Sheffield Hale	Jeffrey Tompkins
Virginia Hepner	Felker Ward
Doug Hertz	Regynald Washington
Bob Holder	Mack Wilbourn
Tommy Holder	Bruce Williams
John Jackson	Ambassador
Joia Johnson	Andrew J. Young



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024 | 6:00 PM  
GEORGIA WORLD CONGRESS CENTER  
GEORGIA BALLROOM



— 35 Years —  
FOUR PILLAR  
QUALITY | RESPONSIBILITY | VISION | INTEGRITY

COUNCIL  
for QUALITY  
GROWTH

# CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF HERMAN J. RUSSELL SR. AND THE RUSSELL FAMILY



Family patriarch Herman J. Russell Sr.'s legacy is one of entrepreneurship, philanthropy, and lasting impact on this region, state, and beyond. Mr. Russell contributed to many of our nation's most celebrated skylines, including Atlanta's. His imprint on our city is shown through his work on many high-profile projects, including Turner Field, Atlanta City Hall, the Georgia Dome, Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, and Philips Arena. Herman J. Russell Sr. is a trailblazer for his family and aspiring entrepreneurs across the country. He was an influential civic and business leader during the Civil Rights Movement. He's an American success story – someone that overcame racism and poverty to turn his father's plastering trade into a national real estate empire with a diversified multimillion-dollar business portfolio.

Even with all of his achievements, Mr. Russell's greatest legacy is found in the work continued by his three adult children, Donata Russell Ross, H. Jerome Russell, and Michael Russell Sr. In addition to running their father's namesake, the H.J. Russell & Company, Concessions International, and Russell New Urban Development, they opened the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs (RICE) in 2018. Together, Donata, Jerome, and Michael are carrying forward their father's legacy while expanding and leaving their own footprint as Georgia's leading African American family in construction, real estate, airport concessions, technology, and philanthropy.

As the 10th anniversary of Mr. Russell's passing approaches, to be honored by the Council for Quality Growth is a fitting tribute. The Russell family embodies the Council's Four Pillars of vision, integrity, responsibility, and quality in all that they do.



Prominent civil rights leaders gather in 1987, Herman J. Russell, Andrew Young, Richard Arrington, and Jesse Hill.



Herman J. Russell consults with Bob Holder in 1983 on construction of Delta Air Lines building in College Park.



Gov. Joe Frank Harris presents Herman J. Russell with the Atlanta Business League's 1986 CEO of the Year.

## ABOUT THE RUSSELL INNOVATION CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURS (RICE)

RICE is Atlanta's home for Black entrepreneurs and serves as an economic mobility engine for the Atlanta community. RICE provides entrepreneurs and small businesses with a place to innovate, grow, create jobs, and build wealth. Inspired by Herman J. Russell's legacy of success rooted in service, RICE remains dedicated to its mission to Build. Black. Business. and stands as the largest center in the world dedicated to growing, scaling, and developing Black entrepreneurs.





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**Donata Russell Ross has been a guiding force as CEO of Concessions International**, which specializes in airport food and beverage concessions at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. In her 40-plus years at CI, she has solidified the company's reputation as one of the best in the industry. She is also President of the Herman J. Russell Foundation.



**H. Jerome Russell is President of Russell New Urban Development**, leading the family's strategic direction and new business development focus. He oversees the company's real estate portfolio and chairs the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs (RICE). In addition to real estate development, Jerome has experience in property management, beverage distribution, logistics, and banking.



**Michael Russell Sr. has been CEO of H.J. Russell & Company for 21 years.** Before he was appointed to the helm of the largest African American-owned real estate and construction business in America, Michael learned every facet of the company, particularly the construction and program management divisions.

## Pure Grit. Built To Last.

From his humble beginnings in segregated Atlanta, when he shined shoes as a kid to put money in his pocket that his parents could not, Herman J. Russell knew he was going to defy expectations. "To hell with segregation. I'm going to be what I want to be," he used to tell himself. That ambition and grit took him from shining shoes to owning a stand where he also sold candy and shoestrings. From there, he followed in his father's hard-working footsteps and became a master plasterer, paying his way through Tuskegee Institute. Next came civil rights strategist; economic generator; builder; and, ultimately, founder of the largest African American, family-owned real estate development, construction, and airport concessions businesses in the country for 60 years and counting.

With pure grit, a vision to succeed, commitment to quality workmanship, responsibility to family and community, and uncompromising integrity, Mr. Russell created an empire that was built to last. He helped forever transform the Atlanta skyline with such projects as Coca-Cola Enterprises, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, luxury high-rise apartments, State Farm Arena, and Mercedes-Benz Stadium, to name a few. His tenacity and can-do spirit resulted in sound business practices that he instilled in his children. As adults, they have continued to grow their father's legacy to pass on to their children, grandchildren, and future generations.

Born without a silver spoon to make life's harsh realities more palatable, H. J. Russell instilled in his children, Donata Russell Ross, H. Jerome Russell, and Michael Russell Sr., that if a door isn't open, try a window. If the window is closed, try the chimney, but don't give up. That's *Pure Grit. Built to Last.*



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## 2024 Tribute Chairs

Jay Bailey  
 Leona Barr-Davenport  
 Dan T. Cathy  
 Cynthia Day  
 David Eidson  
 Ernest Greer  
 Sheffield Hale  
 Virginia Hepner  
 Doug Hertz

Bob Holder  
 Tommy Holder  
 John Jackson  
 Joia Johnson  
 Cynthia Jones-Parks  
 Keith Mason  
 Dave Moody  
 Egbert Perry  
 Sylvia Russell

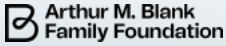
T. Dallas Smith  
 Jeffrey Tompkins  
 Felker Ward  
 Regynald Washington  
 Mack Wilbourn  
 Bruce Williams  
 Ambassador  
 Andrew J. Young

## About the Four Pillar Award

The Four Pillar Award is a prestigious leadership award given to an outstanding individual who has served his or her community, region, and state. Originally presented as the Button Gwinnett Award and Tribute from 1990 until 2004, the Four Pillar Tribute has come to be an unparalleled honor as the Council for Quality Growth has expanded its reach to regional and state-wide members and initiatives. This is the 35th year that the Council for Quality Growth, a not-for-profit trade association with the mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth, has paid tribute to such leaders. The Four Pillar Tribute is a unique honor that celebrates the recipient's philanthropic efforts as well as his or her significant contributions to economic development and the region's quality of life. The "Pillars" represent "Quality," "Responsibility," "Vision," and "Integrity," the principles on which the Council was founded.

## Honorees Over the Tribute History

1990	Steve Reynolds	2002	Governor George Busbee	2014	Steve Selig
1991	Wayne Shackelford	2003	Richard L. Tucker	2015	Dan T. Cathy
1992	J.W. Benefield	2004	Charlie Brown	2016	Jenny Pruitt
1993	D. Scott Hudgens	2005	U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson	2017	Governor Nathan Deal
1994	Wayne H. Mason	2006	John Wieland	2018	Paul Bowers
1995	Virgil R. Williams	2007	John A. Williams	2019	Larry Gellerstedt III
1996	Paul A. Duke	2008	Tom Cousins	2020	Doug Hertz
1997	Jim Cowart	2009	Mayor Shirley Franklin	2021	Ambassador Andrew J. Young
1998	J.D. Caswell	2010	Arthur M. Blank	2022	Carol B. Tomé
1999	A. Ray Weeks, Jr.	2011	R. Charles Loudermilk, Sr.	2023	Ed Bastian
2000	Louise Radloff	2012	Mayor Sam Massell		
2001	F. Wayne Hill	2013	John C. Portman		



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& THE RUSSELL FAMILY**

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Thursday, October 10, 2024 | 6:00 p.m. Reception | 7:15 p.m. Tribute  
Georgia World Congress Center | Georgia Ballroom

285 Andrew Young International Blvd., NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30313 | Parking is available in the Red Deck

SPECIAL REMARKS

**The Honorable Brian Kemp**

Governor, State of Georgia

WELCOME

**The Honorable Andre Dickens**

Mayor, City of Atlanta

INVOCATION

**The Honorable Reverend  
Raphael Warnock**

Senator, United States

TRIBUTE MASTER OF CEREMONIES

**T. Dallas Smith**

Founder & CEO at T. Dallas Smith & Company

TRIBUTE SPEAKERS

**Ernest Greer**

Co-President, Greenberg Traurig

**Jay Bailey**

President and CEO,  
Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs

**Keith Mason**

Founder, KWM Capital Management, LLC

**Zane Major**

**Mori Russell**

**Benjamin Russell**

The 3rd Generation Russell Family

Black Tie Optional • \$175 Per Person

Sponsorships Available • Purchase tickets online  
at [www.fourpillartribute.com](http://www.fourpillartribute.com)

# A MUSICAL TRIBUTE

*featuring H.J. Russell's favorite music*

This curated collection of tributes will honor the Russell Family with a night of music and legacy through performances of H.J. Russell's favorite music.



FIVE-TIME GRAMMY  
AWARD WINNER

## CeeLo Green

PERFORMING MUSIC  
BY SAM COOKE

This Atlanta native singer and songwriter will perform selections from the legendary Sam Cooke, the “King of Soul.” CeeLo is known for signature hits such as “Crazy” and “Forget You,” and his rendition of Cooke’s music will bring a touch of soul and nostalgia to the Tribute while honoring one of Herman’s favorite artists.



DAUGHTER OF ATLANTA'S  
54<sup>TH</sup> MAYOR MAYNARD JACKSON

## Alexandra Jackson

PERFORMING MUSIC  
BY BILLIE HOLIDAY

This Atlanta-based vocalist is known for her versatile work in jazz, bossa nova, and R&B. Alexandra has made a name for herself with ability to seamlessly blend genres and channel the emotion and depth of the music she sings. She will perform music by iconic American jazz singer, Billie Holiday, another tribute to Herman’s favorites.



MULTI-TALENTED  
SINGER & ACTOR

## Chae Stephen

PERFORMING MUSIC BY  
MARVIN GAYE

Chae Stephen, an established R&B and soul artist in Atlanta, will perform selections from the well-known music of Marvin Gaye. Chae’s powerful vocals and emotive style have made him a standout in the contemporary music scene, blending the past and present with his soulful performances.



TRIBUTE MUSIC BY ATLANTA ALL-STAR JAZZ BAND

## Lil' John Roberts & The Senators

Supporting music throughout these tributes will be provided by Lil' John Roberts and the Senators, a renowned Atlanta jazz band celebrated for their electrifying performances.



OPENING TRIBUTE BY H.J. RUSSELL'S ALMA MATER

## Tuskegee University Golden Voices Choir

A special opening tribute will feature the “Golden Voices” Concert Choir from Herman Russell’s alma mater, Tuskegee University. The Golden Voices promote the rich heritage and legacy of Tuskegee University through their renditions of gospel and classical music.

## Champion



CITIZENS TRUST BANK



## Signature



RESSLER-GERTZ  
FAMILY FOUNDATION

## Diamond

Atlanta Fine  
Homes

Sotheby's  
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Atlanta Gas Light



Atlanta Regional Commission



BANK OF AMERICA



GT GreenbergTraurig

Hartsfield-Jackson  
Atlanta International Airport



HUDGENS  
COMPANY, LP

Jacobs

THE FAMILIES OF  
WAYNE & KEITH MASON



Wellstar  
HEALTH SYSTEM



## Platinum

Alston & Bird  
ATL Airport CIDs  
Atlanta Braves  
Atlanta Business League  
Atlanta Commercial Board  
of REALTORS  
Atlanta History Center  
Atlanta Police Foundation  
Cadence Bank  
Centennial Yards  
City of Hope  
Clark Construction Group  
Comcast

Cousins Properties  
Cumberland CID  
DLA Piper  
Equifax  
Fox Building Company  
Carol & Larry Gellerstedt  
Grady Health Foundation  
HNTB  
JAT Consulting  
Commissioner Mereda  
Davis Johnson  
Kaiser Permanente  
Liburn CID

Morehouse School of Medicine  
Niles Bolton Associates  
Paramount Consulting  
Group, LLC  
Peach State Health Plan  
Perimeter CIDs  
Pinnacle Financial Partners  
PNC Financial Group  
Proof of the Pudding  
Pulte Group  
Regent Partners  
Russell Innovation Center  
for Entrepreneurs

Selig Enterprises  
T. Dallas Smith & Company  
Taylor English Duma LLP  
The Integral Group  
Thompson Hine LLP  
Town Center CID  
Truist  
TVS  
University of Georgia  
WSP

## Gold

American Jewish Committee  
Arnall Golden Gregory LLP  
Atlanta Convention &  
Visitors Bureau  
CBRE  
City of Powder Springs  
City of Stonecrest  
Cobb Chamber

Dentons  
DOMINIUM  
Douglas County Chamber  
Empire Communities  
Gas South  
GeorgiaLink Public  
Affairs Group  
Georgia State University

Gwinnett Chamber  
of Commerce  
Hinckley Allen  
JLL  
Jones Worley Communications  
LDG Development  
Metro Atlanta Chamber  
Regions Bank

Robinson Weeks Partners  
Stellar Services, Inc.  
True North 400  
Verizon  
Whiting Turner  
Contracting Company  
John Wieland  
Woodruff Arts Center

## Silver

Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.  
Corporate Environments  
Cresset Capital  
Fort Mac LRA  
Georgia Institute of Technology

Graham & Associates  
Hammond Engineering  
Hussey Gay Bell  
Jackson EMC  
Kimley-Horn

MMHB & Associates  
Morris, Manning & Martin, LLP  
Pacific Group  
Russell Landscape Group  
The Winter Companies

United Consulting  
VHB  
Woodward Academy

## Bronze

AtkinsRéalis  
Atlanta Marriott Marquis  
Atlas  
CERM  
Coastal States Bank  
Falcon Design Consultants LLC

Georgia Construction  
Aggregate Association  
Georgia Research Alliance  
Granite Properties  
Humphries  
Joia Johnson

LEO A DALY  
Novare Group  
Permit Service Group  
(Newborn Permitting Service)  
Project Cost Solutions, Inc.

Slade Land Use,  
Environmental, and  
Transportation Planning, LLC  
Smith Real Estate Services  
South Forsyth CID  
United Way

## THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR TRIBUTE SPONSORS

Tribute Sponsorships as of September 5, 2024. Tribute Sponsorships still available. For more information or to sponsor, contact Megan King at 770-813-3372 or mk@councilforqualitygrowth.org.



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## CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP



2001 Button Gwinnett Tribute honoring F. Wayne Hill



2009 Four Pillar Tribute honoring Shirley Franklin



2013 Four Pillar Tribute honoring John C. Portman



2023 Four Pillar Tribute honoring Ed Bastian



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The Council for Quality Growth, a not-for-profit trade association, is the only organization that works every day to ensure the metro Atlanta region's regulatory environment supports quality growth and development. As the only advocacy organization that operates broadly across the growth and development industry, the Council for Quality Growth brings together and advocates for those who work at the intersection of public policy and private investment, including developers, contractors, engineers, architects, planners, law firms, Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), and financial institutions. The Council is often engaged by the public sector to advise on regulations that protect communities while continuing to encourage economic development. For more information, visit [www.councilforqualitygrowth.org](http://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org).

Historical Photos: New Georgia Encyclopedia; Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/business-economy/herman-j-russell-1930-2014/>.

**FOURPILLARTRIBUTE.COM**

5901-C Peachtree Dunwoody Rd., Suite 500 | Atlanta, GA 30328 • 770-813-3370