

Passion | Leadership | Legacy

Celebrating five years of Passion. Leadership. Legacy.
Celebrating five years of BL²END
2006-2011



BL²END Five-Year Anniversary Celebration
Monday
August 15, 2011
6:30 p.m.

DeVos Place
303 Monroe Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Gala made possible by our generous Event Partners



MIX MINGLE BLEND

Welcome

Dear Community Partner,

Thank you for your continued support! Founded in August 2006, Business Leaders Linked to Encourage New Directions is led by young, passionate and innovative leaders of color who volunteer their time, treasure and talents. Guided by three strategic initiatives of professional development, community outreach and social networking, the organization creates monthly activities for young professionals of color between the ages of 21 and 35. BL²END values collaboration, community, education, integrity and professionalism, and is committed to leading positive change in Greater Grand Rapids.

BL²END is very excited about celebrating five years of service and impact within the Greater Grand Rapids community! Since its inception, the organization has grown from a small, grassroots group of volunteers to an established 501(c)7 with a defined vision, mission, strategy and impact. Tonight's **Passion. Leadership. Legacy.** event is made possible by our generous Event Partners; Priority Health (Passion Partner), Warner Norcross & Judd, LLP (Leadership Partner), and Varnum, LLP (Legacy Partner).

This large endeavor could not be accomplished without supporters like you; who from the start have been instrumental in our success. Thank you! Your presence and partnership is valuable and essential to the future of BL²END.

Sincerely,
Five-Year Anniversary Planning Committee, Co-Chairs



Floriza Genautis
Member, Advisory Council



Maxine Gray
President, Executive Board

Flow

Photo Booth

5:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Capture the moment. Capture 5 years of Passion. Leadership. Legacy.

Gala Registration

5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Ballrooms C and D

VIP Reception *by invitation only*

Presented by Priority Health, Passion Event Partner

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Mix...Mingle...BL²END

Reconnect with old friends and make new ones...

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Five-Year Anniversary Gala

6:30 p.m.

Welcome

Floriza Genautis

BL²END Advisory Council, Member

BL²END Five-Year Anniversary Celebration Committee, Co-Chair

Maxine Gray

BL²END Executive Board, President

BL²END Five-Year Anniversary Celebration Committee, Co-Chair

Founder Introduction

Jamon Alexander

BL²END Founding Board Member (2006 – 2010)

Janean Couch

BL²END Founding Board Member (2006 – 2010)



Flow

Welcome

Erayna Gamble, BL²END Founder

Video

Five years of BL²END...

Invocation & Remarks

Joe Jones

BL²END Advisory Council, Member

Dinner

7:30 p.m.

Awards Presentation

8:00 p.m.

Elizabeth Joy Fossel

Varnum, Legacy Event Partner

Keynote Speaker Introduction

Rodney Martin

Warner Norcross and Judd LLP, Leadership Event Partner

Keynote Speaker

To be a leader of the future...mediocrity simply won't cut it.

Ingrid Jacobs

Diversity and Inclusion, Manager

Whirlpool Corporation

Closing Remarks

9:00 p.m.

Afterglow Reception

Join us for cake, punch and coffee

Grand Gallery F

Keynote



Ingrid Jacobs

Diversity and Inclusion, Manager
Whirlpool Corporation

Ingrid Jacobs earned a Bachelor's of Science degree at The Ohio State University in Agricultural Business after spending most of her formative years in Buffalo, New York. She received her Master's degree in Education, Human Resources Development, from Xavier University.

Much of Ingrid's early professional career was spent in Chicago and San Francisco, primarily in the field of Human Resources. She returned to Ohio where she met and married her husband, Thor Jacobs.

Ingrid loves working to build an inclusive culture for Whirlpool's 71,000 employees as well as exploring the wonderful communities in the state of Michigan with her husband and two small children.



Menu

Antipasto Plate
Assorted cubed cheeses, meats

Grilled Asparagus
and Roasted Button Mushrooms

Grilled Chicken Breast
with Roasted Red Pepper Sauce
and Orzo Pasta Salad with Vegetables

Freshly Baked Rolls
Lavosh and Grissini and Butter

Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee and Tea

Afterglow reception
will feature cake, punch, and coffee

Entertainment

Smooth Groove Entertainment (SGE) is a contemporary five-piece band [piano, bass & electric guitars, drums, and saxophone] that specializes in the genres of: Jazz, Gospel, 'Old School,' and Neo Soul. Our groove has been requested at a wide-array of events, including weddings, private parties, state university sponsored events, receptions and open-mic nights.

www.whodoesitbetter.com

Passion. Leadership. Legacy.

Congratulations to this year's award recipients. We value the contributions and community impact of those who embody the essence of passion, leadership and legacy in Greater Grand Rapids.



Garrett Fox

Passion Award

An accomplished professional and committed community activist, Garrett has worked for 12 years to help youth develop a firm Biblical foundation through curriculum development, training, mentoring and teaching. The Project Blueprint graduate and West Michigan Flocking account manager serves on several volunteer boards and committees.



Heart of West Michigan United Way

Leadership Award

A blueprint for diversity in volunteer leadership, this United Way program helps develop ethnically diverse leaders and connect them to local nonprofit boards and nonprofit committees. Since 1988, almost 800 professionals have become Project Blueprint graduates, and are now lending their expertise and perspectives to non-profits in West Michigan.



Kenyatta Brame

Legacy Award

Past chair of the City of Grand Rapids Civil Rights Commission, Kenyatta's extensive community affiliations include serving as a board member of Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park; the Floyd Skinner Bar Association; Wabash College; and Alternative Directions. The Cascade Engineering executive is an active member of Omega Psi Phi, Inc..



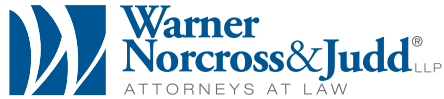
Passion



Priority Health is an award-winning non-profit health plan that has been investing in the communities it serves for 25 years.

We are nationally recognized for innovative solutions that reduce health care costs, improve health, and provide an exceptional customer experience. Our mission is to be the nation's leader in innovative health solutions, making healthcare obtainable for all. As the BL²END Passion Partner, we are pleased to partner with an organization whose mission and values harmonize with our own – embracing change for excellence, demonstrating integrity and accountability, treating everyone with respect and compassion, and investing in the success of our people.

Leadership



Warner Norcross & Judd LLP is proud to serve as the Leadership Partner for BL²END's 5th Anniversary Celebration.

We applaud your success in advancing your mission of enabling young professionals of color to connect with each other, develop professionally and contribute to the local community. Your success benefits everyone in West Michigan. We are honored to serve as your legal counsel and look forward to working together to create a more inclusive environment for all. To learn more about our services and diversity initiatives, please visit www.wnj.com and follow us on Twitter @WNJDiversity.

Legacy



At Varnum, our team of dedicated individuals is the most important resource in our commitment to each other and our clients.

We challenge ourselves to consistently give our personal best, knowing that our individual contributions to the success both of the Firm and our community have lasting impact.

By communicating and living the principles of mutual respect and integrity, we foster a culture and an open environment that values diversity and inclusion. To encourage and inspire diverse participation and leadership in the community – that is our legacy.

Excellence



Dykema is a leading national law firm, serving business entities worldwide on a wide range of complex business issues. Dykema lawyers and other professionals in ten U.S. offices work in close partnership with clients to deliver outstanding results, unparalleled service and exceptional value in every engagement.



GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
www.gvsu.edu

Grand Valley State University attracts more than 24,500 students with 81 undergraduate and 29 graduate degree programs. As a comprehensive university, it serves students from throughout Michigan and dozens of other states and foreign countries with state-of-the-art campuses in Allendale, Grand Rapids and Holland, and regional centers in Muskegon and Traverse City.



Herman Miller works for a better world around you—with inventive designs, technologies and related services that improve the human experience wherever people work, heal, learn, and live. Its curiosity, ingenuity, and design excellence

create award-winning products and services all while maintaining a committed focus on diversity and inclusion.



Saint Mary's Health Care is an integrated health care network offering a unique combination of capabilities to deliver a health care experience that is more

complete and personally satisfying. Our commitment to offer the latest technology and most highly skilled physicians in a holistic, patient-centered environment has made us a progressive leader in cancer care, neuroscience, orthopedics, diabetes and endocrine care, kidney transplants, and integrative medicine.



SPECTRUM HEALTH

Spectrum Health is a not-for-profit health system offering a full continuum of care through the Spectrum Health Hospital Group, comprised of nine hospitals and

180 service sites; the Spectrum Health Medical Group and West Michigan Heart, physician groups totaling more than 600 providers; and Priority Health, a health plan with 625,000 members.



Success



Amway is one of the world's largest direct selling businesses offering consumer products and business opportunities worldwide.



For 125 years, Aquinas College has inspired students to transform the world by providing a liberal arts education infused with the Catholic Dominican values of prayer, study, service and community. www.aquinas.edu Congratulations to BL²END on their 5th anniversary!



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is doing all we can to create a healthier Michigan. Visit bcbsm.com to learn about our commitment to community.



The Grand Rapids Association of REALTORS® is committed to enriching the livelihood of West Michigan by promoting the free enterprise system and private ownership of property.



Grand Rapids Community College, established in 1914, serves over 32,000 students annually in degree courses, certification and training programs, workshops and personal enrichment classes. GRCC holds classes throughout Kent and Ottawa counties.



Grand Rapids
community foundation
For good. For ever.

With its endowment, Grand Rapids Community Foundation leads significant and sustainable social change, supports local non-profits and helps donors achieve their philanthropic goals. www.grfoundation.org

Success



Our mission... helping you to use new thinking in strategic execution, organization development and customer interactions to create compelling results and build long-term success.
www.leeax.com



At Miller Johnson, Attorneys & Counselors, diversity and inclusion are central to how we serve our clients and contribute to our community.
www.millerjohnson.com



What began as a simple service-oriented, scrap peddling business built from scratch by Louis and Helen Padnos, has since grown into a sophisticated, environmentally aware institution with world wide influence.
www.padnos.com



Committed to community since 1960, Rhoades McKee continues to provide comprehensive legal services to a diverse client base from international enterprises to local businesses, individuals and their families.



Steelcase Inc. helps create great experiences -- wherever work happens. Our brands offer a comprehensive portfolio of workplace furnishings, products and services, inspired by nearly 100 years of insight gained serving the world's leading organizations.

Access

Cascade Engineering

Innovative Products Sustainable Solutions

Cornerstone University

Building a Life That Matters

Davenport University

Get Where the World is Going

Farmers Insurance

Fifth Third Bank

The Things We Do for Dreams

Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids

*Changing Lives and Communities
Through the Power of Work*

Haworth

Heart of West Michigan United Way

LIVE UNITED

Huntington Bank

Meijer

Higher Standards. Lower Prices.

Mercantile Bank of Michigan

Michigan Colleges Foundation

Business Professional

Special thanks to our individual partners; those listed and those who elected to remain anonymous.

Achievement Resources, LLC
 A.D.M. Tutoring, LLC
 Courtney & Abraham Properties
 Dante' M. Shackelford, Merrill Lynch Global Wealth Management
 Front Page Video Marketing, LLC
 Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women (GROW)
 Hairacy Salon, 44th Street SE
 Hispanic Center of Western Michigan
 Isabel Genautis
 Jamon and Jasmine Alexander
 Maxine Gray
 Mike and Janean Couch
 Oscar and Leslie Neal
 Paul T. Doyle and Associates
 Relevan, LLC
 Russell, Amy, Morgan and Pickles Pit-og
 Spencer Covey
 Vanessa Greene
 Williams Group
 Zola Saigal

In-Kind Partners



Allegra Printing
 Printing partner



Convention Arena Authority
 Venue partner



Corp! Magazine
 Media partner



Creative Change Mission
 Communications partner



DeVos Place
 Venue partner

DVQ Studio

Eastern Floral and Gifts
 Floral partner

Grand Rapids Business Journal
 Media partner

The Grand Rapids Times
 Media partner



JW Marriott

Laven Web Design

Management Business Solutions

Ruth's Chris Steak House



Five-Year Anniversary Committee

Mercedes Barragan
 Janean Couch
 Floriza Genautis, Co-Chair
 Maxine Gray, Co-Chair
 Marnique Harris

Joe Jones
 Marlene Kowalski-Braun
 Cynthia Offutt
 Brian Parks
 Mindy Ysasi Castanon

BL²END Founder



Erayna Gamble, Founder, BL²END

Erayna earned her BBA in marketing and general management from Grand Valley State University. During her time in Grand Rapids, Erayna had the honor of working with a distinguished group of young professionals to establish BL²END for the service of the Grand Rapids area.

In 2010, Erayna earned her MBA from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University as a fellow in the Consortium for the Graduate Study in Management and an alumna of Management Leadership for Tomorrow.

As an associate brand manager at Nestle USA in the Cleveland, OH office, Erayna helps guide strategic direction and marketing initiatives for the Stouffer's brand. She is a diversity recruiting lead and works closely with management to identify strategies and tactics to recruit high performing MBA candidates for marketing internship positions.

Past Leadership

Board of Directors

- Jamon Alexander, 2006-2010
- Janean Couch, 2006-2010
- Janae Currington, 2006-2007
- Anissa Eddie, 2006-2008
- Jermale Eddie, 2006-2008
- Ronnie Frelix, Jr., 2007-2010

- Erayna Gamble, 2006-2008
- Sara Hill, 2006
- Marquisa Nash, 2006
- Cynthia Offutt, 2009-2010

Advisory Council Members

- Susan Morales-Barias, 2008-2009
- Tanja Oquendo, 2008-2010



2011 Board of Directors

Alicia Adell, M.Ed
Grand Valley State University
Social Networking, Chair

Mercedes Barragan
Cascade Engineering
Marketing Communications,
Co-Chair

Maxine Gray, M.S.
Herman Miller, Inc.
President, Executive Board

Marnique Harris, M.A.
Grand Valley State University
Vice President, Executive Board

Jamie Martinez
Fifth Third Bank
Professional Development, Chair

Brian Parks
Herman Miller, Inc.
Treasurer, Executive Board

Latoya Person
Management Business Solutions
Secretary, Executive Board

Celeste Sánchez
Spectrum Health
Community Outreach, Chair

Danielle Williams
Amway
Marketing Communications,
Co-Chair

2011 Advisory Council

Floriza Genautis
Management Business
Solutions

Joseph D. Jones
E.E Milestone + Associates, Inc.

Marlene Kowalski-Braun
Grand Valley State
University

David Luna
Saint Mary's Health Care

Rodney Martin
Warner Norcross & Judd, LLP

Eddie Tadlock
SMG/ DeVos

Sandra Upton, Ph.D.
Cornerstone University



Business Leaders Linked to Encourage New Directions

Thank you is not enough. From the depths of our hearts, we would like to thank every individual and organization who has made this event possible.

We would like to thank the Greater Grand Rapids community for five years of embracing our ideas, and five years of allowing us to make a positive impact where we choose to live, work and play.

We are engaged for life, and look forward to many more years of connection and ways to *Mix...Mingle...BL²END*.

www.grblend.org

info@grblend.org

P.O. Box 3505

Grand Rapids, MI 49501



Connect with us on Facebook and LinkedIn



Follow us **@grblend** on Twitter,

and tweet during the event using the **#blend5ya** hashtag.

*Event is being live-streamed at **grblend.org***