

The Generator

Newsletter for the NextGen Network, Inc. – Preparing the next generation of African American Leaders

FALL 2007

Leadership Perspectives: NextGen Network, Inc. Rounding Out 2007 With a Bang!

By Tamara Nall, Secretary



This year the NextGen Network, Inc.'s leadership team launched several strategic initiatives to drive the organization forward. Major accomplishments include:

- **Strategic Board Session.** In June, the NextGen Network leadership met with its Board of Directors to review its strategic plan and pertinent milestones for the coming year.
- **Selection of 2007 Professional Class.** This year we welcomed over 20 new members representing various backgrounds, professions and industries.
- **Institute Membership Application Process.** A formal process was launched to transition pipeline seminar graduates from The Executive Leadership Council's Institute for Leadership Development & Research into the NextGen Network organization.
- **Membership Survey.** This year the membership committee successfully launched our 2007 membership survey. We enjoyed a 76% response rate, which was a record in the history of our organization.

Some positive highlights from the survey include: a) Forty-two percent (42%) of our NextGen Network members were promoted within the last year; (b) member-to-member networking opportunities are highly valued, and (c) the

majority of respondents value professional development opportunities.

Other feedback that the leadership team has already started to address are: (a) create programs focused on sales and negotiations, entrepreneurship and strategic planning and (b) communicate how members can become more involved in organizational committees and activities.

- **Update of the Bylaws.** Special thanks to Joy Booker and LaToya Rembert for updating our organizational bylaws. These changes make the organization more efficient by adding new capabilities such as electronic ballot voting.
- **"I Am A Business Initiative."** You listened; we heard! Special thanks

to John Burt and Cassandra Sloan for launching this effort, which is tailored to meet the increasing desire of members to receive entrepreneurial programming.

- **2007-2008 Operational Plans.** The NextGen Network Leadership Team has implemented an operational planning process that maps and prioritizes organizational initiatives to the annual budgets.
- **Leading the Community Outreach Committee,** Heather James jump-started NextGen Network's community efforts. She represented NextGen Network at several events for the Trenton and Waterbury affiliates of Granville Academy and is

Cont'd on page 2

NextGen Network, Inc. Welcomes 20 New Members	2
The Prudential Effect.	4
Member Spotlight	5
Career Focus	5
ELC Focus	6
Partner Spotlight	11
Members on the Move	13

In This Issue

NextGen Network Inc. was founded in 1999 as a youth affiliate of The Executive Leadership Council™, the nation's premier leadership network of the most senior African American corporate executives in Fortune 500 companies. NextGen Network, Inc. is a world class professional organization that offers career and professional development, community service opportunities, and points of connectivity for African-American business professionals.

NextGen Network, Inc.'s mission is to create a professional network and development opportunity for African American professionals, to serve as an extension of The Executive Leadership Council and its charitable affiliate The Executive Leadership Foundation, to provide career and professional development for future business leaders, and to offer community outreach programming and support.

NextGen Network, Inc. Welcomes 20 New Professional Class Members

By Kevin Hinton

This year's group of Professional Class members is the largest and most diverse in NextGen Network Inc.'s history. The industries they represent include: automotive, consulting, energy, education, financial services (including investment banking, commercial banking, insurance and real estate), health care, hospitality, media, retail, telecommunications and the US Navy. Their responsibilities span the gamut of corporate duties, including corporate policy, general management, government relations, legal affairs, operations, product development, project management, sales, strategic

planning and technology. They are geographically situated in states from California to New York. In line with NextGen Network Inc.'s current profile, these new members range in age from the mid-twenties to the early forties. Most hold graduate degrees in fields that include business administration, law, medicine and public health.

The selection of these members represents the culmination of a rigorous, competitive application process. Professional Class Membership candidates must demonstrate through their

applications the following three key characteristics:

- Promise for growth in a professional career
- Excellence and commitment to academics
- Commitment to community service

NextGen Network, Inc. is honored to have such a distinguished group of new members. We are confident that these new members will make great contributions to the organization and continue to excel professionally. ■

1. **Kelvin Baggett**, Vice President & CEO, Clinical Services Group, Hospital Corporation of America (HCA)
2. **Chloe Barzey**, Partner, Accenture
3. **Stanley Dobbs**, Regional Director, Supply Chain, Naval Aviation
4. **Michael Holt**, Manager, Consultant Relations, AIG Global Investment Group
5. **T. Hudson Williams**, Vice President of Diversity and Multicultural Initiatives of Time Warner Inc.
6. **Ramsey Jay, Jr.**, Associate Analyst, Ares Management
7. **Tiffani Lott**, Director, B2B Coverage Strategy, Establishment Services Division, American Administration
8. **Sheila Marmon**, Director, Multimedia Brand Development and Strategy, ESSENCE Magazine, Time Inc.
9. **David Mitchell**, Managing Director, Structured Equity Products, Bear, Stearns & Co. Inc.
10. **Leea Nash**, Associate, Strategy Home Team of Booz Allen Hamilton
11. **Darren Peters**, Manager, System Government Affairs, Entergy Services, Inc.
12. **Kyle Price**, Director of Customer Development and Local Marketing, Food Lion LLC
13. **Kimberly Smith**, Vice President, Product Development, Discovery Education
14. **Kimberly Spears**, Senior Consultant, Strategy and Operations, Deloitte Consulting
15. **Cheryl Spruill**, Vice President, Internal Audit, Prudential Financial
16. **Mel Steals**, Implementation Coordinator, Continuous Improvement Team, PNC Financial Services Group
17. **Tasheeya Warren Ellison**, Director, Corporate Counsel, Tax Department, Prudential Financial
18. **Michael Watson**, Senior Product Manager, Strategy and Development Group, JP Morgan Chase
19. **Matthew Whitehead**, CEO, MJW & Associates
20. **Brock Williams**, Business Associate, greatDestinations Leadership Development Program, Carlson Companies, Inc

Cont'd from page 1

participating in planning for the potential start-up of a Newark, NJ affiliate.

- **Annual Report.** NextGen Network is proud to announce the release of its first annual report. This effort was led by Dele

Oladapo and Tyrone Thomas.

This report was yet another milestone for the organization and will be used as marketing collateral to The Executive Leadership Council and potential sponsors.

The leadership team knows that many of our successes would not be possible without all of our dedicated members, so thank you. As you can see, NextGen Network has been very busy, and we are confident that 2008 will be even better! ■

NextGen Network, Inc.'s Advocate: Reginald Van Lee

By Tamara Nall

Since its inception, NextGen Network, Inc.'s success has been supported by many Executive Leadership Council's members. One such member is Reginald (Reggie) Van Lee, Senior Vice President, Booz Allen Hamilton, who has mentored NextGen Network, Inc. members, supported member involvement in non-profit fundraising events and encouraged the organization's collaboration with The Executive Leadership Council.

Besides being a member of The Executive Leadership Council, Mr. Van Lee serves on the Board of Directors of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund; the Abyssinian Development Corporation; MIT's National Selection Committee; the New York International Ballet Competition, and the New York City Center for Charter School Excellence; Chairman of the Board of the EVIDENCE Dance Company. He is a Trustee and Treasurer of the Studio Museum in Harlem and Chairman of the Corporate Advisory Board at the University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business. Mr. Van Lee was named one of the top 25 consultants in the world in "Consulting Magazine" in 2000 and was recognized as one of New York's Finest Philanthropists in 2002. In 2004, Mr. Van Lee received from New York University their C. Walter Nichols award for outstanding community service as well as the prestigious Spirit of Cabrini award by the Cabrini Mission Foundation. In 2005, Mr. Van Lee was awarded the Joseph Papp Racial Harmony Award from the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding and in 2006, he was awarded the Black Engineer of the Year "Pioneer" Award.

As if he isn't busy enough, Mr. Van Lee maintains a demanding work schedule along with his numerous charitable and philanthropic activities. He is currently a Senior Vice President in Booz Allen Hamilton's McLean, VA office where he leads the firm's organization and change capabilities in Global Health Public Sector agencies and the firm's Not-For-Profit business. His expertise lies in how global organizations can build capabilities to make them resilient to potential shocks to mission accomplishment and growth. He has also worked extensively with private sector, public sector and NGO sector clients in the area of strategic transformation and high performance organizational design. His experiences range from helping health organizations transform to better achieve their mission and goals to co-leading the Urban Enterprise Initiative with the William Jefferson Clinton Foundation in New York City, focused on driving enhanced competitiveness for small businesses in Harlem to driving growth and mission accomplishment in not-for-profit organizations like Habitat for Humanity, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, the American Cancer Society and numerous foundations.



When he is not busy giving of himself in a charitable manner, Mr. Van Lee manages to find time to give of himself intellectually. He has co-authored articles on the topic of strategy implementation and developed an innovative and integrated "tool kit" for management with techniques designed to help leaders realize new strategies and institutionalize existing strategies. He has been published in *The Journal of Business Strategy* and *Business Horizons* and Mr. Van Lee has even appeared numerous times on ABC's "World News This Morning" television program and CNBC.

During a rare moment of uninterrupted time with Mr. Van Lee, NextGen Network, Inc. asked him to provide his thoughts on how he sees the organization evolving in the coming years. He responded, "Given some of its strategic initiatives, growth in membership, and strong leadership, NextGen Network is well on its way to feeding the next wave of African Americans into the C-Suite."

NextGen Network, Inc. proudly salutes Mr. Van Lee for his contributions to the community and to our organization. ■

The Prudential Effect

By Dawn Kelly, Prudential Financial, Inc.

International Insurance Shares Best Practices with NextGen Network, Inc.

As a lead sponsor of the NextGen Network, Inc. Prudential believes one of its most important roles is to build the capabilities and knowledge base of the network's members. And that was the primary goal of the second NextGen Network, Inc. seminar and networking reception hosted by the company in Newark, NJ.

More than 50 NextGen Network, Inc. members—emerging African-American leaders from within Prudential and at other Fortune 5000 companies—attended the seminar, which carried a global theme. “The global economy continues to dramatically reshape the way domestic companies conduct business around the world,” says Ken Tanji, Vice President of finance for Prudential Annuities and a NextGen Network, Inc. board member. “It is more important than ever that individuals learn ‘best-in-class’ strategies to succeed in this environment.”

Craig Merdian, a Vice President in International Insurance and the keynote speaker at the event, gave an in-depth overview of International Insurance's strategy and outlined opportunities for future growth. He also highlighted some of the best practices that have led to extraordinary achievements in many of the unit's operations.

“Next Gen Network's membership is a valuable resource,” says Merdian, “and I am delighted to help Prudential strengthen its relationship with this important group.” ■



Craig Merdian (left) and NextGen Network member Kerry Benson discuss the merits of International Insurance's business model.

Prudential Hosts Empowerment Reception for Future African American Business Leaders

Tens of millions of baby boomers are reaching retirement age, which, according to Prudential Vice Chairman John Strangfeld, will have a far-reaching impact on the financial services industry. It will also have an impact on up-and-coming African American business leaders. “As emerging leaders, you have the skills to get in the game. Remember that you must maintain relevance by shifting and responding to a constantly changing marketplace,” Strangfeld advised during a Prudential-sponsored reception for members of NextGen Network Inc.

The NextGen Network, which includes seven Prudential employees, is an affiliate of The Executive Leadership Council, the

premier leadership network of the most senior African American corporate executives in Fortune 500 companies. Sharon Taylor, Senior Vice President of Corporate Human Resources, Prudential, and a member of The Executive Leadership Council says, “We highly value our relationship with The Executive Leadership Council and NextGen Network, Inc. as well as how well their focus on leadership development aligns with Prudential's talent management strategies.” “We're excited about the role we will play, along with other member companies, in building future leaders within the financial and business community.” ■

Member Spotlight

Frank M. Clark III

By Tiffani Chambers



Every day, Frank Clark is surrounded by top business talent. As a Principal in the Chicago office of Tillman Carlson, he focuses on the recruitment of top executives, CEO's, CFO's and CIO's across various industries, with a particular emphasis on tracking diversity talent across the country. After many years as a business executive, coupled with his years of experi-

ence in the senior executive search business; Mr. Clark quickly recognizes "star" talent when he sees it. Major factors that he attributes to successful business leaders, particularly diversity candidates are: possessing an excellent ability to galvanize and lead groups of people, strategic thinking, balanced humility and unwavering integrity. Prior to joining Tillman Carlson, Mr. Clark spent several years with R.R. Donnelley as Corporate Vice President, Alliance Markets Group, where he drove growth across Donnelley's divisions by forging strategic

alliances and joint ventures with Minority and Women Owned Businesses across the U.S. His earlier experiences include several years in sales and marketing with Motorola, Ameritech and EDS.

Mr. Clark joined NextGen Network, Inc. in 2002 as a developing executive within RR Donnelley. Over the past five years, he has served as Co-Chair of the Connections & Development Committee and has been involved in the selection criteria of new NextGen Network, Inc. members.

Mr. Clark graduated from Northern Illinois University and has a MBA from the Illinois Institute of Technology. He is an active member of the Union League Club of Chicago, as well as a Fellow of the Leadership Greater Chicago organization. Mr. Clark serves on the Board of Directors for the Lookingglass Theatre Company, Morgan Park Academy and Chicago Communities In Schools (CCIS). ■

Oral Muir

By Rochelle Beard



Oral Muir is Senior Director for Global eCommerce Channels at Marriott International, headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland. In his role Mr. Muir provides global leadership for sales, business development, and account management for Marriott's external Internet and electronic channel relationships with businesses such as

Expedia, Priceline, Kayak, Travelport, and Sabre. Mr. Muir also serves as the business leader for non-lodging initiatives, such as online air/car/hotel vacation packages and online rental car sales for Marriott.com, now the 8th largest Internet site in the world, in terms of revenues.

Prior to joining Marriott International in 2000, Mr. Muir was a member of Lexis-Nexis' Strategic Marketing organization, where his responsibilities included online marketing and product development for a corporate counsel Center Internet portal. In 1995, prior to Lexis-Nexis, and while at The Weinberg Consulting Group in Washington, DC, the firm's CEO tapped Mr. Muir to develop a new venture. Mr. Muir co-founded and served as Executive Director for

Building Science Technology and Education Partnerships Inc. (Building STEPS), and through a partnership with seven scientific and high technology businesses in the area, created a pipeline for entry-level minority science and high technology professionals.

Mr. Muir completed his MBA at Johns Hopkins University in 1999, and is also a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University Leadership Development Program, and currently serves as President of the Leadership Development Program Alumni Association. In 1999, Mr. Muir was a winner of the Executive Leadership Council's national business writing competition, and subsequently served as a founding board member and Secretary of the Executive Leadership Council's NextGen Network. Mr. Muir was an undergraduate at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and in delivering the commencement address at graduation in 1993 he challenged his fellow graduates to work to build a better tomorrow, as earnestly as they would work to build their careers.

Mr. Muir resides in Fort Washington, Maryland with his spouse of 11 years. ■

Career Focus: Are You Fit for Your Ascent to the Top?

By Ramsey Jay, Jr.

As rising executives of the 21st century, we will be responsible for earning advanced degrees, obtaining professional licenses, delivering high-quality results, and serving as leaders in our communities and at home. But as Next Generation Leaders with increasing demands and decreasing time, it is critical that we pause and ask ourselves, "Are we fit for our ascent to the top?"

At one time or another, we have all heard that there is a high correlation between fitness and career success, and recent studies confirm as much. A survey of highly paid executives, conducted by executive search firm TheLadders.com, revealed that 75% of

those surveyed felt that "good physical fitness is critical for career success at the executive level and that being overweight is a serious career impediment" (HR Magazine, January 2006). Additionally, a recent study by British researcher Jim McKenna revealed that after exercising "employees are more tolerant of themselves, more forgiving of their colleagues, work performance was consistently higher, time management skills improved, as did mental sharpness".

As we begin to take steps towards reaching the executive boardroom, the image that we project in our tailored power suit will continually shape others' perceptions of us. Professional skills

and academic credentials are important, but looking and sounding like a healthy rising executive prepared to lead a company are just as important. After all the hard work and time that we have committed to getting our careers to this point, we cannot afford to be excluded from an opportunity to advance because of poor health or a poor self image.

The quiet confidence that we exude when we are fit and feeling good about "our look" will garner the respect of our colleagues and confirm to our superiors that we have not only the professional skills, but also a concern for personal excellence because we are fit for our ascent to the top! ■

The Executive Leadership Council Focus

By Mario Lewis

Roy Dunbar



The NextGen Network, Inc. Focus Column interviewed Mr. W. Roy Dunbar, President of Global Technology and Operations at MasterCard

Worldwide, to discuss his experience in managing a global organization and the skills required to be successful in that environment. Born in Jamaica and raised and educated in England, Mr. Dunbar has a broad and diverse background working in and managing organizations located all over the world. Prior to joining MasterCard Worldwide, Mr. Dunbar was the president of Eli Lilly's Intercontinental Region and was responsible for the company's operations in Africa, the Middle East, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Please describe your roles and responsibilities at MasterCard Worldwide as the President of Global Technology and Operations.

In my position, I oversee MasterCard's strategic processing platform, global network, and quality of operations. First, I am responsible for maintaining the operational effectiveness of our transaction processing capabilities. The majority of our revenues are derived from the processing of transactions. Our focus on efficiency and the quality of our technology enables us to leverage a highly scalable network. Secondly, I am tasked with business development of network and processing opportunities. Based upon our scale and the capabilities of our transaction-processing infrastructure, we have the capacity to

Cont'd on page 7

continuously add customer transaction volume to our network. We are working aggressively to expand our global footprint by winning more business, with an emphasis on growth in Europe and Asia.

As a leader of a global organization, what are the key challenges to overcome to be successful?

In any global organization you face the constant challenge of prioritizing your resources to accomplish your objectives. Our organization has more opportunities than resources to take advantage of those opportunities. We must continue to develop and coordinate our integrated strategies and tactical plans around that right balance of priorities and resources.

All companies have to remain adaptable in this ever-changing business environment. Today's business environment requires you to quickly respond to issues and refocus your energies to address these issues. The best and brightest companies and leaders are systematically addressing these challenges by fostering environments where changes and obstacles are viewed as opportunities.

How did your background and experiences prepare you to face and overcome these challenges?

My background and work experiences in various countries have made me comfortable with taking on new and challenging assignments. In each new position, I have learned to adapt to new business environments, new people, new languages and often new cultural norms. Over time, it has allowed me to strengthen my people and management skills and build my confidence in leading organizations. As a result, I am comfortable entering into new environments and quickly assessing what needs to be accomplished and the steps required to achieve the desired result.

At each stage in your career, what prompted you to often take on responsibilities outside of your comfort zone? And how did it prepare you for the next opportunity?

As a child, I was always naturally curious and found the unknown to be very intriguing. Each time I was moved to a dramatically new environment, I embraced it and made the most of each situation. I was never deterred by the thought of failure and as a result have always been drawn to new challenges. All of the positions I have taken on have had some degree of risk, however, instead of dwelling on the downside, I was more focused to the benefits to be received in accomplishing the upside.

My career steps have been as deliberate as the opportunities that have been presented. When each new opportunity arose, I was always prepared to take on that challenge at that time. While it may seem that each new career opportunity may have not been directly linked to the previous or seemed random, there is nothing random about the act of being prepared for the next challenge.

Please identify the important lessons learned in turning around a global organization.

This answer may seem simplistic or cliché, but 'people' is the answer. In turning around an organization, it is crucial to reach out to others and let them know their help is needed to resolve the issues. The global nature of the organization will add to the complexity due to the potential communication, distance, language and cultural barriers. In all situations, I share the challenge with all others impacted to create a sense of openness and teamwork. When the team develops and then executes the plan together, each member has a vested interest in its success. I learned from one of my early work experiences that leaders of teams

do not always have to make decisions by themselves.

As a global executive, how do you balance the needs of your company, your team and your personal needs?

My family is the most important part of my life, therefore I give special attention to the balance of work and family. From early on, my wife and I anticipated that we would have international careers and we adopted that mindset. As our children have grown, they have accepted that as well and we use it to our advantage. For example, we often travel independently and meet each other in cities across the world. We spend lots of quality time together, however the locations where we spend that quality time are often different.

What words of wisdom do you have for NextGen Network, Inc. members currently considering international assignments?

Always remember that the world is becoming metaphorically smaller. Spend the time understanding the forces in the world that are driving this movement. You will not get an understanding of these forces sitting behind a desk in the U.S. I am a big advocate of traveling internationally and taking on assignments away from home base. There is much to be learned from understanding the cultures and people in other parts of the world. The ability to look at the world through the eyes of others will become an even more important skill set in the future.

Finally, continue to work on your people skills. Practice your ability to connect with others and ensure that you are approachable at all times. As you become more senior in your careers, it becomes even more important to be influenced as well as influence others. Every day, there is an opportunity to improve your people skills. Take advantage of this opportunity. ■

Sergio E. Sotolongo



NextGen Network, Inc. Focus interviewed Sergio Sotolongo to discuss his experiences starting and building a company and his decision to pursue this entrepreneurial venture. With over 20 years at global investment banking firm, Goldman Sachs, Mr. Sotolongo left as a Managing Director and founded Student Funding Group, LLC (StuFund) in April 2006. StuFund, a full service student loan origination company, is the first Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) in that sector. In continuing with its growth strategy, StuFund, in April 2007, announced that they entered into a strategic partnership with Lehman Brothers that provides StuFund with working capital as well as a warehouse line of credit and gives Lehman Brothers a minority stake in StuFund.

Please describe your roles and responsibilities at StuFund?

As the Chairman and CEO, I am responsible for all aspects of our business. I am always selling the Company and its products and services to customers, investors and partners. On a daily basis, I seek to build relationships that can help move the business forward. The Lehman strategic partnership is a great example of a relationship that will allow both firms to be successful in the student lending arena. Internally, I focus on developing a strong corporate culture that will help sustain our Company in the long term. It is important for me to show a strong level of commitment to our business, a continuous focus on delivering value to our customers and partners and display honesty and fairness in dealing with others.

What is your vision for StuFund?

The vision of the Company is to “build a national student lender of scale.” However, this business can be used as a platform for growth because stu-

dent loans are often a young person’s first introduction to a financial services institution. Over the long-term, I envision that the Company will evolve into a full service financial services entity that will broaden its reach to other consumer loan products. In the meantime, we are solely focused on our mission to provide student loans for students who could not afford college otherwise and to support and guide families through the financial aid process. It is also extremely important to us to be able to deliver a high quality product with an emphasis on excellence in customer service.

What prompted you to launch StuFund and how did your corporate career prepare you for this opportunity?

I had always been intrigued by the idea of a student loan origination company, as a way to create a socially responsible lender. As such, I saw a tremendous opportunity in the market for a Minority-Business Enterprise, as none existed in the space prior to our formation. The need for real quality information as well as competitively priced products led me to formulate and cultivate the StuFund mission. As such, I decided to leave Goldman last year to pursue this venture. With that experience, I was confident and prepared to launch StuFund. Additionally, I had the full support of my family, which was very important to me.

Please describe your thought process in making the decision to leave Goldman.

The decision to leave Goldman was a difficult one. That said, I was confident in the business model and had many years of corporate experience where I developed contacts and colleagues. It was my sense that from a timing point of view, the opportunity was clear.

Describe the challenges you have faced and overcome and the lesson learned so far in building your company.

There are so many important lessons that I have learned since starting this Company.

First, no two days are the same and you have little time to react to the many issues you have to deal with. Prioritizing these issues is crucial to success.

Second, our ability to manage relationships and projects is tested on a daily basis. It is important to quickly learn the skills and strengths of the members of your team and leverage their abilities for the benefit of the organization. Every day, we are in execution mode and there is little room for error.

Unfortunately, you don't have the benefit of practicing in this environment – that's what your corporate experience is for.

Third, we are selling the business all of the time to customers, partners and investors. And in all cases, you have to always ask for the order as no one will just give it to you. So far, we have built relationships with several financial institutions, as well as various colleges, universities and

corporations. This partnering must continue for us to achieve our vision.

Finally, the Company provides full transparency of the business to all employees. We have bi-monthly staff meetings and everyone has access to our quarterly report. Everyone must think like an owner and be engaged in all aspects of the business.

As an entrepreneur, how do you balance the needs of your company, your customers and your personal needs?

As with any business that you are passionate about, it is difficult to switch off at any time. Fortunately, I have the benefit of my family being involved in the business. With my family sharing this common experience, it helps me to balance my work and personal life. For example, my wife, who is a clinical psychologist by training, is working on building our Direct-to-Consumer business line. Her skill at networking and understanding people has been helpful in working with clients and building and maintaining relationships. Additionally, she provides me with a vital check and balance through her unfiltered and to-the-point feedback. Not having her as a part of this business would be a waste of a valuable resource. Additionally, I am thrilled that my children play a role in the Company.

What words of wisdom do you have for NextGen Network, Inc. members (currently working in corporate positions) considering launching their own companies?

I am a huge proponent of entrepreneurship as a tool to maximize your

destiny and setting your path. I am convinced that I should have taken the plunge sooner as I have benefited greatly from this experience. I encourage NextGen Network, Inc. members to ensure they have many options. Spend the time in your corporate career refining your skills and training yourselves. Don't lose sight of what your company can offer you. Seek opportunities to earn more and seek mentors. No one is going to hand it to you – you have to go out and take it.

Also, don't be afraid to turn to others for help. My Executive Leadership Council colleagues have been there every step of the way by providing me with high level contacts, opening doors within companies, investors, and financiers, allowing me the opportunity to go in and sell myself and the business, and other forms of relationship building. The number of entrepreneurs that are Executive Leadership Council members will continue to grow. The Executive Leadership Council will continue to play a larger role in developing entrepreneurs and helping them build their enterprises in the future, and providing other support services. ■

“Do What You Say You Are Going To Do”: Revisiting NextGen Network, Inc.’s Conversation With Ron Meyer

By Kevin Hinton

One year ago, I enjoyed the great pleasure of moderating “A Conversation With Ron Meyer,” a featured event of the 2006 fall Dinner Leadership Events of The Executive Leadership Council and NextGen Network, Inc. in Washington, DC. Ron Meyer, President and Chief Operating Officer of Universal Studios, participated in a one-hour discussion modeled after the popular Bravo television show “Inside The Actors Studio.” Ron appeared before an audience that included NextGen Network members, graduates of the “Strengthening the Pipeline” program sponsored by The Council’s Institute for Leadership Development & Research, and high school students from The Granville Academy and the Minneapolis based High School for Recording Arts.

Mr. Meyer has enjoyed a remarkable career distinguished by achievements in both corporate and entrepreneurial leadership roles. As President and Chief Operating Officer of Universal Studios, he serves as a member of General Electric Company’s executive leadership team. Prior to joining Universal Studios, Mr. Meyer served as president and co-founder of Creative Artists Agency, Inc. Under the leadership of Mr. Meyer and his fellow co-founders, Creative Artists Agency, Inc. (CAA) became a market leader in the talent agency business. Fortune magazine described CAA as “Hollywood’s powerhouse” in an article published in the October 15, 2007 issue. He began his career as a messenger with the Paul Kohner Agency, a talent agency based in Los Angeles, in 1970. Mr. Meyer literally worked his way up from the

“Relationships can help to get you through the door, but the best thing you can do for your career is to be a person of your word ...”



NextGen Network, Inc. member Kevin Hinton (left) and Ron Meyer share a laugh during the panel discussion.

bottom to become a leading figure in the entertainment business. In the process, he earned a reputation as a leader with great integrity and determination. This integrity and determination has no doubt helped him to survive numerous Universal Studios ownership and leadership changes (including a recent CEO transition at NBC-Universal).

Mr. Meyer fielded questions on a wide variety of topics and delighted the audience with his openness, humor and candor. I was interested particularly in his views on the importance of relationships to career success and asked for his thoughts on this topic. To my surprise, he downplayed relationship building. Instead, he focused on the importance of following through on commitments. “Relationships can help to get you through the door, but the best thing you can do for your career

is to be a person of your word and do what you say you are going to do.” Mr. Meyer shared with the audience what it has meant to his career to be perceived as someone who keeps his word. Later on, he shared his thoughts on the topic of diversity in the film industry. He concluded his remarks by encouraging audience members interested in the entertainment business to contact him after the event.

We were incredibly fortunate to have the chance to spend time with Ron Meyer, and we remain thankful for The Council’s critical role in arranging for his participation. An event photo gallery and synopsis is still available on The Executive Leadership Council’s web site (http://www.elcinfo.com/features_ron_meyer2.htm). ■

Partner Spotlight: Urbanomics Consulting Group

By David Greene, Urbanomics Consulting Group

For the past five years, Urbanomics Consulting Group has provided program management and administrative support to ensure the relevance and responsiveness of NextGen Network, Inc.'s programs and activities to meet the needs of the members. Although the organization is a 100% volunteer based, NextGen Network, Inc. saw the need to partner with a dedicated team of experienced professionals to manage the growing demands of program planning for the organization. David Greene, president and CEO of Urbanomics, leads a program management team with core competencies in strategic planning and marketing. The scope of work they assist the organization with includes but are not limited to:

- Membership Data Management and Communication
- Member Development
- Corporate Sponsorship and Fundraising
- Community Outreach
- Meeting and Conference Planning
- Internal and External Communications
- Media Relations

Urbanomics Consulting Group is a strategic marketing & planning firm named for its principals' experience managing national programs and initiatives targeting urban audiences. Through public-private partnership, business collaborations, and the like, Urbanomics strategically pairs companies and causes to bolster institutional change initiatives by aligning progressive brands with important business and social issues.

The company is a wholly owned and operated African American firm certified by the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)

as a Corporate Plus member, with the capacity for national contracts. In November of this year, Urbanomics will celebrate ten years of service. Almost a decade of experience has allowed the firm to perfect its service offerings of Public Awareness and Education Campaigns, Cause Marketing and Communications and Cause-Related Public-Private Partnerships. Staff skills individually and collectively represent best practices of organizational development, marketing promotions, public affairs, and community relations.

Strategic Planning	Facilitation
Focus Group and Survey Research	Program Planning
Media Planning and Relations	Stakeholder Outreach

These competencies serve the company in supporting large and small clients in national engagements and have helped implement a number of important projects such as NextGen Network, Inc.'s member survey, meeting evaluation, program growth expansion and strategy development.

Urbanomics' customers give them high marks for conceptualizing, developing, and executing successful public relations and cause marketing initiatives. The firm has been a central partner in creating strategic awareness for a number of Fortune 500 companies and professional associations such as Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC), Black Data Processing Associates (BDPA) Johns Hopkins Leadership Development Alumni Association, Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA), National Association of Corporate Directors, National Association of Investment Companies, NextGen Network, Inc. and The Executive Leadership Council.■

NextGen Network, Inc. Community Outreach

By Mario Lewis

In keeping with The NextGen Network, Inc.'s mission of community outreach programming to enhance the lives of African American youth, the organization continued its outreach to the Granville Academy and hosted its annual Donna Jamison Lago (DJL) Memorial Scholarship 2007 Essay Competition.

Heather James, Chairperson, NextGen Network, Inc. Community Outreach Committee participated in several events for the Trenton and Waterbury affiliates of Granville Academy and is participating in planning the potential start-up of the Newark, NJ affiliate. The Granville Academy is a free, after-school coaching and counseling program designed to give inner-city youth an introductory knowledge of business and industry.

The DJL Memorial Scholarship 2007 Essay Competition, now in its 8th year, provides African-American high school seniors with the opportunity to earn

scholarship dollars while addressing important issues affecting minority communities. This year's competition theme, sponsored by Entergy Nuclear Northeast, was "Strategies for Environmental Leadership."

The top three finalists received cash prizes of \$2,500 each to use towards their college expenses. Three semifinalists received \$1,500 each, and four honorable mentions each received \$500. The 2007 Scholarship winners are:

Finalists

Elysia Johnson, Saratoga, CA
Jonathan Rabb, Minneapolis, MN
Katherine Long, Fort Collins, CO

Semi-Finalists

Audrey Richards, Baltimore, MD
Bridget Widdowson, Wallingford, PA
Jonathan Smith, Silver Spring, MD

Honorable Mentions

Brian Fontenot, Baytown, TX
Emeka Okparaekwe, Jackson, NJ
Sarah Anderson, Shamong, NJ
Trishelle Copeland-Johnson, Apopka, FL

Entergy Nuclear Northeast, a division of the Entergy Corporation- one of the nation's largest global energy companies — was lead sponsor of the essay competition. Based in White Plains, NY, Entergy Nuclear Northeast delivers electricity to more than three million homes in the New York City and Westchester County areas, and supplies power to support New York City's transportation system.

The Donna Jamison Lagos Memorial Scholarship Essay Competition is named after a founding member of NextGen Network, Inc. who lost her battle to cancer in 2003. The scholarship was created to educate and encourage high school seniors to think critically about important issues affecting their lives. ■

Young Professional's Toolbox: Keys to a Better You

By Jacqueline Jenkins

With the endless demands of juggling a challenging professional and personal life, we easily forget the value of investing time in ourselves to ensure a positive mind, healthy body and strong spiritual foundation. Rana Walker, M.Ed., President and Founder of Diamond Cutter LLC, a Philadelphia-based wellness company, advises her clients to indulge in rejuvenating experiences. Walker challenges clients to ask themselves, "Do I value me?" Walker explains, "When you value yourself, then you are able to better value others." The following are tips on how to add value to our lives.

MEDITATION – a state of concentration on an object or thought or state of being helps to clear the clutter that muddle up our inner thoughts. By freeing our

thoughts through a centered stream of consciousness, we are able to create a space of peace within our minds. Gerri H. Walker, M.Ed., CEO of Diamond Cutter LLC, coaches her clients to create a meditation ritual either morning or night. Walker comments, "We are unaware of the amount of tension that the body holds. Meditation is mental deep cleansing."

JOURNALING – the practice of capturing our thoughts on paper is another means to quiet our minds. The secret to journaling is to write whatever is on your mind and to allow yourself to be in the moment with your thoughts. This exercise channels your concentration to your present mood, experience and/or environment. By forcing your mind to think in the present, you suspend the noise that exists due to worries or concerns for future or past actions.

Journaling provides a release of emotions that enables our mind to assume a restful state.

TIME OFF – Dr. Tracey Campfield, a DC clinical psychologist, comments, "A mental health day is a great means to give your mind a break." Often it is challenging to schedule long vacations but an extended weekend is a way to create a release from the daily work routine and to enjoy some mental downtime. Dr. Campfield further explains, "A day off relaxes the body which increases your productivity while working."

Additional reading material: Ram Dass, *Journey of Awakening: A Meditator's Guidebook*, Bantam Books, 1990. ■

Members on the Move

By Sheila Mamon



Dele Oladapo

Dele Oladapo has been awarded a 2007 CareerFocus Eagle Award by the National Eagle Leadership Institute (NELI). The

CareerFocus Eagle Award, presented annually by NELI and CareerFocus Magazine, is one of corporate America's highest accolades in leadership achievement, saluting African-American and Hispanic-American executives who set a higher standard of leadership. Mr. Oladapo earned this award for embodying NELI's model of dignity, integrity and honor and accruing a performance record that inspires others to achieve greater levels of business and community leadership. Dele will receive his award at the 15th Annual Eagle Awards Gala in November.



Kevin Hinton

Kevin Hinton joined the National Association of Investment Companies (NAIC) as Vice President in July 2007. NAIC is

the industry association for private equity firms that dedicate financial resources to the development of an ethnically diverse marketplace. NAIC's member firms invest in companies with extraordinary growth potential and manage over \$8.5 billion of capital in aggregate. As Vice President, Mr. Hinton is responsible for NAIC's Journal of Emerging Domestic Market Finance, research initiatives and the Plan Sponsor & Minority Manager Annual Consortium. Mr. Hinton also completed a three-year term as a member of the Executive Committee of the Williams College Society of Alumni

earlier this year. Selection to the Executive Committee is considered one of the College's highest forms of volunteer recognition.



Penny Allen

Penny Allen has been promoted to Vice President, Information Systems at Prudential Financial. Since

joining Prudential in 2004, Ms. Allen has successfully developed and advanced the department's information security and privacy programs. Her leadership and technical skills have had a deep impact on Prudential and have directly resulted in a stronger control environment around its employee information and overall data security. As VP, Information Systems, Ms. Allen is responsible for setting the strategic direction and managing information risk for the Company's corporate Human Resources privacy and information security programs, as well as ensuring its third party vendors advance their programs to comply with Prudential's in order to continuously protect personal information for the Company's employees.



T. Hudson Williams

T. Hudson Williams has been named Vice President of Diversity and Multicultural Initiatives of Time Warner Inc. In her

new role, she will lead continuing efforts to promote a culture of inclusion at Time Warner, working with corporate and divisional leadership to implement strategies that support diversity across Time Warner's businesses. Ms. Hudson Williams has been recognized person-

ally for her commitment to driving diversity-related business results. In 2007 she was named to The Network Journal's annual "40 Under Forty" list. The Network Journal's "40 Under Forty" recognizes the next generation of African-American leaders who have proven to be exceptional performers in their industry and are committed to the development of their communities.



Dr. Kelvin Baggett

Dr. Kelvin Baggett has been named Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Clinical Services Group at the

Hospital Corporation of America (HCA). Previously, Dr. Baggett was a Strategic Business Consultant within HCA's Strategic Resource Group, an internal consulting firm. In his new role, Dr. Baggett is responsible for developing and executing strategies to improve quality, safety and clinical performance throughout HCA, the nation's leading health system. He is also responsible for coordinating Clinical Service Group operations focusing on Physician Alignment, Hospital Strategies, and Clinical Programs. Dr. Baggett's extensive background in both medicine and business provide a unique resource to assure a practical, efficient and results-oriented approach to quality at HCA.



Mike Watson

After a successful run leading the Corporate Information Technology Sarbanes Oxley Program in JP

Morgan Chase's Information Technology Risk Management group, Mike Watson has joined JP Morgan Chase's Strategy and Development group. As part of this group, Mike will serve as a Senior Product Manager focusing on Internet Strategy and Development. In his new role, Mr. Watson will have responsibility for strategic planning, execution, and evaluation for enterprise and retail products and services.



Ramsey Jay, Jr.

Ramsey Jay, Jr. has joined Ares Management, an investment management firm that specializes in managing assets in both the

private equity and leveraged finance markets. In his new role as an Associate Analyst, Mr. Jay will focus on the Funds' Capital Markets investment activities. Additionally, he was recently named as one of "Thirty Young Leaders Under 30" by Ebony magazine. The elite roster of young men and women who are "representative of the enormous talent and promise among African-Americans who are age 30 and younger" was presented in the February 2007 issue of Ebony. Some of Mr. Jay's activities that contributed to this recognition included serving on the Board of Directors of Los Angeles' New West Symphony and on the Steering Committee for the 2007 Cedar Sinai Sports Spectacular.



Stanley Dobbs

Stan Dobbs, Regional Director, Supply Chain, Naval Aviation, was recently honored for his valued contributions to business transformation by the Deputy Secretary of Defense at the Department of National Lean & Six Sigma Symposium held at

the National Conference Center in Washington, DC. A practicing Black Belt in the Six Sigma methodology, he championed two projects that were selected for the Wall & Walk of Fame showroom display from both industry and government participants. One project created a global repair facility for fighter jet engine repair, and the other established a robust third-party logistics region-wide supply chain management process for California and Nevada region military bases. The storyboards will be part of a traveling Road Show display for other agencies to model. In the past year, Mr. Dobbs' works have contributed \$672 million in cost impact initiatives to the bottom-line and is tracking to reach \$1 billion. Additionally, in July 2007, he received a Pioneer Award from the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for his work on Information and Data Quality Management for Enterprise Resource Planning Systems. The Pioneer Award is given to practitioners who have made a significant contribution to their field of expertise.



Andrew Frazier

Andrew Frazier was named the first Chief Operating Officer for The Executive Leadership Council and joined the team

effective February 2007. Mr. Frazier is no stranger to The Executive Leadership Council having been involved in many of the organization's pipeline programs and activities since participating as a shadow mentee in 1998. He also served as the President of the NextGen Network, Inc. from 2004-2005. Mr. Frazier brings a wealth of talent and experience to his new role having held positions with significant responsibility most recently as an Assistant Vice President at the New York Life Insurance Company where

he worked in the office of the Chief Diversity Officer, Corporate Services, Financial Management, office of the Chief Investment Officer, and the Mergers & Acquisitions departments. He also achieved the very challenging professional designation as a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) while at New York Life.



Laurence Latimer

Laurence Latimer joined SunGard in May 2007 as Vice President for Project Management in the Trading division.

He reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for driving execution and commercial results of key initiatives. SunGard (www.sungard.com) is a global leader in software and processing solutions for financial services, higher education and the public sector with revenue exceeding \$4 billion. Part of the financial services group, SunGard Trading has over \$300 million in revenue and includes a portfolio of six related companies serving the equity trading, commodities risk management and energy sectors.



Wokie Nwabueze

Wokie Nwabueze has been promoted to Vice President, Business Ethics & Resolve Office at Prudential Financial. Ms.

Nwabueze brings to the Business Ethics and Resolve Office 14 years of Alternative Dispute Resolution facilitation, mediation and training experience. In her new role, Ms. Nwabueze has primary responsibility for enterprise wide Business Ethics and code of conduct education and communication. Additionally, Ms. Nwabueze supports the Business Ethics & Resolve Office function by facilitating the

investigation of business ethics matters, providing internal conflicts resolution services and preparing parties for external mediation and arbitration proceedings.



Sekou Kaalund

Sekou Kaalund joined JPMorgan in July 2007 as the new global head of sales for Private Equity Fund Services. In this capacity, he

manages a global team responsible for new business development of out-

sourced administration solutions to private equity financial sponsors and institutional investors with portfolios of alternative investments. Mr. Kaalund was formerly the head of strategy and planning for Securities and Fund Services at Citigroup, Inc. and was responsible for managing and executing global strategic investment, acquisition and divestiture activity. ■

2007 Corporate Contributors

\$100,000

Prudential Financial

\$5,000 to \$99,000

Entergy Nuclear Northeast

Food Lion

The NextGen Network, Inc. relies on the strategic investment of companies through sponsorship dollars for the delivery of its member development and community outreach initiatives. A partnership with NextGen Network, Inc. provides development and support to the African American talent pipeline across industry and functional areas.

Every company, regardless of its size, can benefit from a partnership with NextGen Network, Inc. to enhance the skills, and confidence, of high potential employees. NextGen Network, Inc. provides the resources to help African Americans become more successful in their careers.

There are a number of ways in which an organization can partner with NextGen Network, Inc. Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Providing direct monetary support of operating services
- Sponsoring a program/activity
- Including NextGen Network, Inc. in company matching gift programs
- Providing in-kind gifts of products or services
- Providing venues for meetings and networking events around the country

For more information about sponsorship opportunities, contact NextGen Network, Inc. in care of Urbanomics Consulting Group. ■

Please send inquiries about this publication to:

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NextGen Network, Inc. 2007 Leadership Team

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Joy Booker

Vice President, New York Life Investment Management

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NC Institute of Minority Economic
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