

# *TransAtlantic Education Leadership Exchange*

## *2015 Summit*

### *Speakers*

#### **Elizabeth Reed, First Lady of Atlanta**

Sarah-Elizabeth Kristan Reed is an attorney and real estate developer. She is the wife of the 59th and current Mayor of Atlanta, Kasim Reed, and the First Lady of the City of Atlanta. As an Atlanta native, she is a graduate of Pace Academy where she attended kindergarten through 12th grade. She then graduated from the University of Michigan in 2000 with a degree in French and received her J.D. from Howard University School of Law in 2003. The daughter of two strong public servants, her late father Senator Arthur Langford Jr. was a Baptist preacher and a Georgia State Senator and her mother an attorney and prominent community leader.



Sarah-Elizabeth currently consults with real estate developers on affordable and supportive housing projects. While in law school, she worked for United States Congressman John Lewis and later traveled to Paris, France to work at the law firm of Baker & McKenzie. After law school, she worked for the D.C. Office of General Counsel for five years and later as an affordable housing developer for National Church Residences for eight years.

As First Lady, she champions early childhood education initiatives and family and youth mentoring programs. As a result of her work in affordable housing, she is also knowledgeable about and interested in addressing the challenges and need for housing and essential services for the homeless.

Sarah-Elizabeth knew her husband for over 15 years before marrying and campaigned with him as early as 1998 when he was elected to the Georgia State House of Representatives. Shortly thereafter, he was elected to the Senate where he held the same seat (35th district) previously held by her late father.

As a fluent French speaker, Sarah-Elizabeth has spent time traveling Europe, Asia and Africa and lived and worked in France. In 2001 she served as the District of Columbia Cherry Blossom Princess and then later competed in both the Miss America and Miss USA pageants. Sarah-Elizabeth also won \$50,000 on the NBC hit show Fear Factor and donated half of the prize to UYAC, a youth mentoring organization. She is an advocate for the arts and serves on boards including the Atlanta Children's Museum and the nonprofit BIH.

She and her husband have one daughter, Maria Kristan Reed. As the wife of a mayor and daughter of a preacher and politician, she has become a role model for women, and an advocate for children, family and poverty awareness.

## Minna LeVine, Eco Commerce Exchange

LeVine has over two decades of leadership experience managing individuals, organizations and brands. She has also grown established companies and built emerging businesses, and has acted as a liaison between management teams in domestic USA and abroad. LeVine has served in non-profits, trade organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and has been a featured speaker in numerous events worldwide. Her career highlights include: Founder/CEO Advantages International LLC (1994), IT consulting group; Executive Producer in New York, Telly Award Finalist (1995); Founder/CEO, H2OAlliance (2006); Founder/CEO, Chamber of Eco Commerce (2009). Her work experience highlights include: professional consulting; financial management and asset management; project management; human capital development; government contracting support and compliance; and public administration.



LeVine currently works as an Administrator, Chamber of Eco Commerce, acting a liaison between investor, management, financial and advisory teams. She focuses on technology, performance excellence, brand development, strategy, operations, product design, marketing communications, sales growth, and profitability. Her international working group experience includes: CEO Water Mandate (UNDP); Business Call to Action (UNDP); Clean Technology; Water; Energy; Environmental Technologies; Nano; IT and ICT; Human Technology; Food & Beverage; Military; Economic Development; International Tourism; Response to Climate Change; People with Disabilities; Catalytic Philanthropist; Youth Sports; Bible Study. Education highlights: Postgraduate studies University of Houston (TX) and ICTA (MA); undergraduate Porvoo Institute (Finland), internship Hospitality Management (Switzerland). Married, lives in Atlanta with her husband William and four children. LeVine immigrated into the United States in 1984, resided in 15 countries, and is a multi-lingual communicator.

## Tana Torrano, Eco Commerce Exchange

Torrano is the Founder of Organization Supporting Business Owners (OSBO), Co-Founder of Eco Commerce Exchange and Owner of Market Vision – Marketing, PR and Advertising Agency. Her previous experience includes over 25 years in advertising, sales and marketing. Torrano was a top producing advertising executive for Athens Broadcasting, a large media company with four radio stations and a television station, for six years averaging over half a million in sales per year.

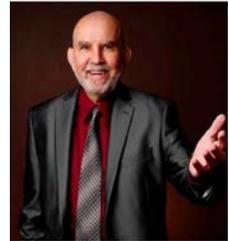


Torrano speaks on a wide range of topics and success training from personal goal setting and time management to sales training and trade shows seminars. She is also a featured guest speaker for many organizations and is a frequent guest on national business programs on radio, television and internet radio. Other accomplishments include:

- Executive Women International Woman of the Year 2006.
- US State Department and US Department of Commerce Grant for OSBO and University of Alabama for a business development and discovery trip to Armenia in 2006.
- 5 year business correspondent on ABC affiliate in Huntsville AL
- 3 year business correspondent on CBS affiliate in Huntsville AL
- Expert interview business column for Career Builder
- Business Expert on call for Alabama media
- Numerous national interviews as Business Development Expert

## **Jim Dawson, Finish American Chamber President**

Mr. Dawson is the Finish American Chamber President as well as the CEO of ADI Marketing, which is a company that provides decision maker access to clients in 5 core competencies: 1) Appointment Setting at the Decision Maker Level, 2) Customer Satisfaction Surveys, 3) Seminar Attendance, 4) Database Building, and 5) Market Research. Mr. Dawson has developed a full course curriculum in Leadership, Customer Service, Communications, Team Building and HR. He has published "How to Make Changes in the Workplace for You," "101 Prospecting Nuggets," and "Getting to the Truth by Asking Good Questions."



He has an MBA from Farleigh Dickinson University in Information Technology and a degree in Wildlife Biology from the University of Vermont.

## **Michael Gustafson, Scandinavian American Foundation of Georgia**

Michael Gustafson has served on the Scandinavian Foundation of Georgia Executive Committee since 2012. His interest in Scandinavian culture goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when his Swedish and Norwegian ancestors farmsteaded in Minnesota, where Michael also grew up. He lives in Atlanta and works for Autodesk, a global design software company based out of San Rafael, CA. Michael holds a BS and MS from the University of Minnesota in Civil Engineering, and an MBA from the Michael J. Coles College of Business.



The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) promotes international understanding through educational and cultural exchange between the United States and Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. The organization was founded in 1911 and is governed by a Board of Trustees of individuals from the United States and Scandinavia, representing diverse interests yet linked by personal or professional ties to the Scandinavian countries. The five Nordic Heads of State serve as the organization's Patrons.

## **John Saunders, Honorary Consul of Finland**

John D. Saunders is a Partner in, and the head of, one of the Corporate Practice Sections of the Firm and a member of the Investment Management and Investment Advisory Practice Group, the Corporate Law Practice Group, and the Air Transport Industry Group at Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP.



Mr. Saunders is the senior partner in the Investment Management and Investment Advisory Practice Group. He has represented investment advisor clients for over twenty years. He has significant experience with a broad range of issues dealing with the organization, operation, and regulation of registered investment advisers.

Mr. Saunders has many years of experience in aircraft acquisition and financing matters with a particular expertise relating to engine acquisition, financing, leasing and maintenance issues. In addition, he has over 40 years experience representing U.S. - and foreign-based clients in a variety of matters including general corporate, acquisitions, securities, joint ventures and related business issues. He has developed a unique niche in representing Scandinavian firms and currently represents approximately 20 Finnish-based companies in connection with their U.S. activities, as well as other European-based concerns.

## **Cynthia Britson, Deputy District Superintendent, Dekalb County Schools**

Britson oversees 26 schools throughout the Dekalb County School District. This district is the third largest school district in the state of Georgia and educates more than 101,000 students at 137 schools with more than 14,000 full-time employees and 6,000 teachers.



## **Gerald Porter, Head Master, Christian Heritage School, Dalton, GA**

Christian Heritage School is a K-12, co-educational, college-preparatory, Christian school that provides a purposeful education and encourages students to push their intellectual boundaries. Christian Heritage offers a Christian worldview while providing academics that challenge, athletics that build, arts that inspire, and active faith that endures. The goal of Christian Heritage is to build character, confidence, and integrity in every student. CHS promotes a strong academic environment supported by small class sizes, a report of each student's rank would not be the best predictor of future academic success.



## **Jari Multisilta, National Leader, Finland-USA Science Across Virtual Institutes (SAVI): Member of National Board of Education in Finland**

Multisilta is the Professor of Multimedia at the Tampere University of Technology, the Director of the University Consortium of Pori, and the Associate Professor at the faculty of Behavioral Sciences at the University Of Helsinki, Finland. Previously, he was the Director of the Cicero Learning Network at the University of Helsinki.



He has conducted research on learning and modern communication and information technologies since 1990's. Currently, his research interests include networked and mobile learning, mobile video storytelling for learning, and educational games. Multisilta has also been the Visiting Scholar at Stanford University, School of Education, H-STAR Institute several times between 2007 – 2014.

He is a former member of the team at the National Board of Education in Finland that was preparing the new core curriculum for basic education and secondary education in Finland (2011 – 2014). He has served as a PI in several international research projects, and developed MoViE, a Mobile Video Storytelling platform for learning through video stories at schools. Multisilta used the tool in Finland, Greece, California, Spain and Singapore so far with students from first graders to 12th graders. His aim has been to create a tool that enables children to create meaningful digital video stories related to their learning, possibly in collaboration with another class in another country.

## **Ryan Cox, HATponics**

Ohio native Ryan Cox hails from a family of farmers and has spent much of his life in a greenhouse. Ryan attended Ohio State University and began his professional life abroad, living in Mexico and Japan before returning to the United States in 2002, and beginning a variety of successful green businesses dedicated to environmental conservation. Ryan has always been passionate about food security and sustainable farming methods and began Inner City Aquaponics in 2010, after moving to Chattanooga to bring aquaponics technology to young students in urban environments. He founded HATponics in 2013, and hopes to see



his vision reach every corner of the globe.

### **Tim Echols, Public Service Commission**

Tim G. Echols is an elected official originally from Clayton County, Georgia, who was elected to the Athens-area seat on the Georgia Public Service Commission in 2010. He is author of the book "Real Citizenship" and founded Family Resource Network, a non-profit firm that helps young families be successful in infant care and parenting. In 1993, Echols created TeenPact to help young people understand state government and public policy. Echols is married to Windy Davis Echols and they have 7 children.



### **Justin Sachs, Eco Press Publisher**

Sachs brings a wealth of experience as his role as CEO of an established innovative publishing firm. He's authored and published his own two best-selling books --Your Mailbox Is Full and The Power of Persistence. He learned product development, packaging and distribution by working with Anthony Robbins and Mark Victor Hansen.

What inspires him is a desire to help others share their message. With Motivational Press, he is able to serve and educate hundreds of millions of people internationally.



### **Stacy & Roger Vaughn, D-Unity Group**

D-Unity Group is a Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) & Minority Owned Small Business (MOSB), which assists clients with business growth, through seminars and workshops, with the necessary tools and direction to compete for government contracting and grant opportunities. D-Unity's focus is to: Educate, Mentor and Train (EMT). All businesses do not know how to compete for Government contracts and grants. Their mission is to build partners and build long-term alliances with a vetting process to support large and medium organizations to utilize small business goals.

Specialties include: advising and consulting in state, local and federal government contracts and grants and grant opportunities as well as provide resources for minority and disadvantaged certifications and business strategies.

