

100 Black Men of Atlanta hold virtual fundraising gala

After a year that no one will soon forget, the 100 Black Men of Atlanta stopped to celebrate its successes during the pandemic year of 2020, honor four notable Atlantans, and raise some money to continue mentoring and educating young men and women.

During a fundraising gala May 13th that was held virtually, The 100 gave its top awards to radio icon Tom Joyner (Andrew Young Lifetime Achievement Award), 1968 Olympic Gold Medal sprinter Tommie Smith (Maynard H. Jackson Community Impact Award), basketball Hall of Famer and newly appointed head of USA Basketball Grant Hill (Nathaniel R. Goldston III Trailblazer Award) and Goodr CEO Jasmine Crowe (John Lewis Emerging Leader Award). Crowe's food waste management company connects restaurants with nonprofits.

The 100 also honored Microsoft Corp. with its Chairman's Circle Corporate Responsibility Award. The company donated \$100,000 in cash, plus contributed technology and training and helped create a computer science class at B.E.S.T Academy on Atlanta's west side. Microsoft recently announced it has purchased 90 acres at Quarry Yards and Quarry Hills to house a future campus, part of a series of investments aimed at making Atlanta one of Microsoft's largest hubs in the United States in the coming decade.

At the gala, themed "Investing in Our Communities," the organization saluted outgoing board chair Kevin A. Gooch and his accomplishments over the past two years.

"As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, the last year was filled with challenges for our organization and our community, but we found a way to come together and flourish as an organization," said Gooch.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, 100 Black Men of Atlanta had a strong year financially and programmatically in 2020.

The 100 awarded more than \$160,000 in tuition and other educational assistance, continued the co-ed Career Pipeline Program, a 10-week career readiness program that prepares college students with the soft skills net essay to be successful in the workplace and it was honored by Mutual of America with the Thomas J. Moran Award for its robotics program, the 100 Scholars Robotics Alliance.

The 100 also hired new staff, avoided layoffs and provided groceries, meals and other critical aid to families that had suffered job losses.

“We doubled down on our commitment to the Atlanta community, to young men and women, children and families,” said the 100’s Louis Negron, who was named executive director and chief operating officer in February. “Our reach was more extensive. We served more young people virtually than we had in person.”

The group’s success was aided by an increased commitment from corporate partners and other donors.

“People definitely invested in The 100 who had not done so before,” Negron said.

On the day following the fundraising gala, May 14th, the 100 introduced its new leadership, with the virtual inauguration of Keith I. Millner as the 18th chairman of the board.

CBS46 Anchor Karyn Greer emceed the event, which featured greetings from Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., National Chairman, 100 Black Men of America, Inc., and the swearing-in of the board officers by Judge Glenda Hatchett.

Millner said the unprecedented events of the past year make the mission of the 100 even more important.

“While progress continues to be made, the world has witnessed a remarkable increase in social injustice in the last 18 months, and a coming together of Americans around the issues of equality, equity, and social justice,” he said. “Because of these egregious events, it’s clear that the mission of The 100 and the work it does is more relevant and necessary than ever before.”

Both the gala and the inauguration can be seen on the 100 Black Men of Atlanta’s YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRHIJZcviuGu0DBx1bu0-hA/videos>



