



**Atlanta Area Council**  
American Business Women's Association



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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Happy April ABWA Atlanta Area Council Members!

New Beginnings.....

Spring is a time of new beginning and growth. for me. New journeys are on the horizon. Everything comes to life. Flowers are blooming, the bare trees get all dressed up with their new leaves, the weather is getting warmer, and people are getting outside and connecting with friends and family. New beginnings...Students are graduating and stepping into their next step of their life journey. There is new excitement and energy in the air.



We are doing the same in our ABWA leagues. This is a time for us to grow personally and professionally. Step into something new – Try something you had not tried before – Challenge yourself – Opportunities are abundant! Invest in yourself and take advantage of the great opportunities available to you as a member of ABWA. Share your story – Why are you a member of this amazing organization? Why do you stay? No matter where you are or who you meet – Your ABWA story can be told. You never know when it will inspire that next new member to join. I challenge you to Level Up and invite one person to join our Association. This will allow the seeds within your league to grow and blossom.

Spring is special in ABWA. We honor exceptional women who are contributing to the success in their communities and their ABWA leagues. Let's congratulate all our chapter Women of the Year and Top Ten Nominees! Each of these individuals are planting the seeds for others to grow and blossom. Thank you for all you do daily to make a difference! Each of you is so very deserving of this prestigious recognition.

I will leave you with this quote as a point of reflection:

"Embrace the new changes even if it makes you feel anxious. Take that decision even if it seems life changing. Trust the timing of life. Nothing can be more satisfying than choosing to challenge yourself for the sake of your own self and talent and succeeding in it! Embrace the new beginnings, for everything happens for your own good." ~Aamilah Riza~

New Beginnings. New Growth. New Excitement! New Energy! Keep nurturing your personal and professional gardens so you can thrive.

Best in ABWA,  
Anne O'Neill  
2024 Atlanta Area Council Chair

*find unity in*  
**COMMUNITY**  
AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
1949-2024



## 2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD



**Chairman: Anne O'Neill**  
Harris County Charter Chapter  
Email: [abwaanneoneill@gmail.com](mailto:abwaanneoneill@gmail.com)  
Cell: 770-883-6427



**Vice-Chairman: Irene Hudgins**  
Airport Charter Chapter  
Email: [ihudgins@bellsouth.net](mailto:ihudgins@bellsouth.net)  
Cell: 404-202-0923



**Communications Officer: Retoin George**  
Golden Dome Charter Chapter  
Email: [rgeorge@yahoo.com](mailto:rgeorge@yahoo.com)  
Cell: 404-488-7248



**Financial Officer: Denise Turner**  
Pyramid Chapter  
Email: [deniseturner52@gmail.com](mailto:deniseturner52@gmail.com)  
Cell: 678-925-9153



**Ex-Oficio: Delsonia Chappell**  
Pyramid Chapter  
Email: [deechappell@hotmail.com](mailto:deechappell@hotmail.com)



## **2024 Atlanta Area Council Committee Leaders**

**Decorations  
Debbie Matthews**

**Professional Development  
Roshon Thomas**

**Fundraising  
Peg Taylor**

**Program  
Nichelle Mathur**

**Hospitality  
Valjean Williams**

**Public Relations  
Dr. Deborah Johnson-Blake**

**DVP Celebration  
Delsonia Chappell**

**Sponsorship  
Linda Williams**

**Membership  
Karen Taylor-Moody**

**Technology  
Carolyn Parks**

**Newsletter  
Gloria Hayes**

**Woman of the Year (2025)  
Delsonia Chappell**

**Shower of Cards  
Ethelyn Barksdale**

## Atlanta Area Council

American Business Women's Association

# CHAPTERS OF THE QUARTER!

## APRIL MEETING

Golden Dome Charter Chapter  
Harris County Charter  
Hidden Hills Chapter

## JULY MEETING

Distrit 1 DVP Celebration  
All Atlanta Area Council Leagues

## OCTOBER MEETING

McIntosh Chapter  
Pyramid Chapter  
Solidarity Chapter



### ABWA Mision Statement

To bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support and national recognition.

### Council Vision Statement

The vision of the Atlanta Area Council is to promote communication between chapters, to disseminate information, to exchange ideas, to participate in workshops, seminars and other joint activities, and to provide opportunity for members to grow personally and professionally through education, networking support and community recognition.

*find unity in*  
**COMMUNITY**

AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

1949-2024

### Invocation

Lord in the quiet of this hour, we come to thee for wisdom and for power, to view Thy world through only loved-filled eyes; to grow in understanding, to be wise; and sure to see Thy guiding light, and thus to know each other as Thou knowest us. Amen

### Benediction

O guiding spirit, guardian of our days, be with us as we go our separate ways. Help us feel those thoughts that lift and bless, to know a closer bond of friendliness, to see Thy beauty, always, every day, translated into living, this we pray.  
Amen

# Atlanta Area Council

American Business Women's Association

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	TIME	EVENT
APR 26	11:00am - 01:00pm	<b>Quarterly Council Meeting Top Ten/WOTY Recognition</b> Hilton Airport Hotel - 1031 Virginia Ave., Atlanta
JUN 07	09:00am - 01:00pm	<b>Leadership Workshop</b> 50 Glenlake Pkwy., Ste. 400, Atlanta, GA 30324
JUN 13	07:00pm - 08:30pm	<b>ABWA - Just In Time Webinar</b> An Informative Webinar for all Members Virtual - (3 of 4) for 2024
JUL 26	06:30pm - 08:30pm	<b>D1VP Celebration - Friday Night Reception</b> Hilton Airport Hotel - 1031 Virginia Ave., Atlanta
JUL 27	09:00am - 03:00pm	<b>Educational Forum &amp; Luncheon Honoring District I VP Sonya Lowe</b> Hilton Airport Hotel - 1031 Virginia Ave., Atlanta
SEP 21	10:00am - 12:00pm	<b>Executive Board Meeting</b> Virtual via ZOOM
SEP 25		<b>National 75th Women's Leadership Conference Kansas City, MO</b>
OCT 26	11:00am - 02:00pm	<b>Quarterly Council Meeting - Inner Circle Awards &amp; Elections</b> Hilton Airport Hotel - 1031 Virginia Ave., Atlanta
NOV 09	11:00am - 02:00pm	<b>Transition Meeting</b>

# Atlanta Area Council

American Business Women's Association



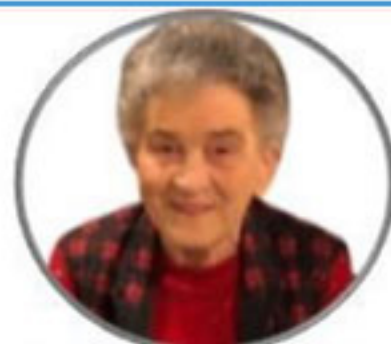
2024 WOMAN OF THE YEAR

**DR. DEBORAH JOHNSON BLAKE**

Douglas County Charter Chapter



“Dr. DJ” is the 2021 American Business Woman of the American Business Women's Association (ABWA), a 2021 Top Ten Business Woman of ABWA, the immediate past ABWA District 1 Ambassador Steering Committee Rep, and a past president of the Douglas County Charter Chapter of ABWA.



### 2024-2025 ABWA NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF

*Barbara Jones*

*Beloved Member of American Business Women's Association Harris County Charter Chapter*

Scholarship Award: \$2,500\* | Field of Study: Open | GPA: 3.0 or higher | Institution: In State of GA

Grade Level: Freshman to Graduate | \*This scholarship is contingent upon funding.



Harris County Charter Chapter

**Harris County Charter Chapter National Scholarship** in Memory of Barbara Jones information. They are still in need of applications for this scholarship

The deadline for all applicants is May 15th. This is a \$2500 scholarship for a College freshman or higher. The applicant must reside in GA.

## Inner Circle Recognition levels

We will be recognizing Inner Circle members at the April meeting.

### Inner Circle Levels

After qualifying for membership in the *Inner Circle*, members may earn higher Friendship Star charms as they continue to sponsor more new members. These awards are as follows:



**Emerald Star**  
for sponsoring at least 22 new members



**Golden Sapphire Star**  
for sponsoring at least 33 new members



**Blue Sapphire Star**  
for sponsoring at least 44 new members



**Garnet Star**  
for sponsoring at least 55 new members



**Amethyst Star**  
for sponsoring at least 66 new members



**Pearl Star**  
for sponsoring at least 77 new members



**Diamond Star**  
for sponsoring at least 88 new members

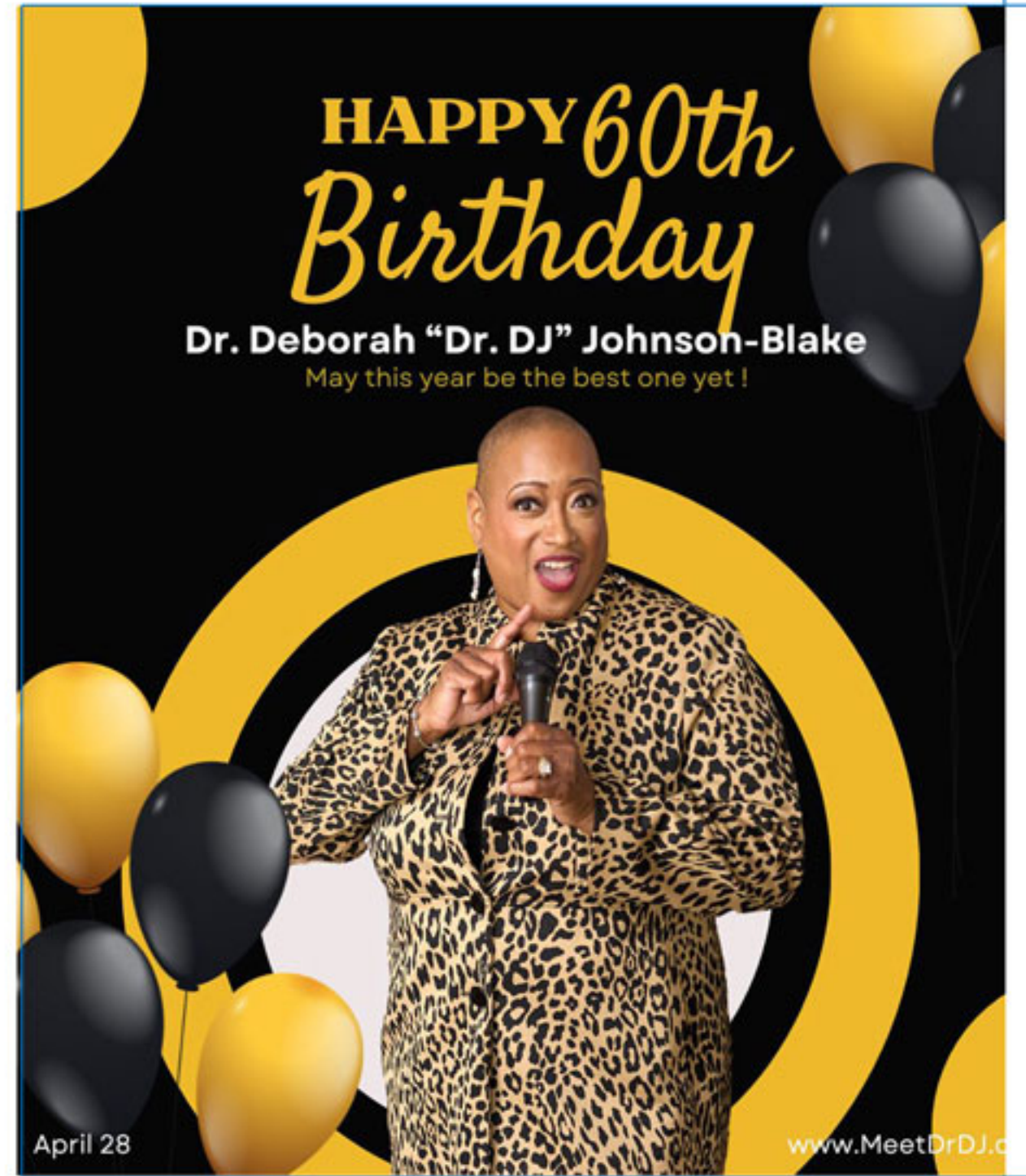


**100 Plus**  
for sponsoring more than 100 members

Atlanta Area Council  
American Business Women's Association

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Carolyn Parks celebrated her 70th Birthday on March 16, 2024 with her family and Fabulous Foxes! She was serenaded in song by her sons and several other musicians! It was a STELLAR event!



**2024 EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP**

Saturday, June 8, 2024 9AM – 2PM

50 Glenlake Pkwy. Ste. 400  
Atlanta, Georgia 30328  
(Abernathy Road Exit Ga. 400)

**Fee: \$45 (includes lunch)**

Register and Pay Online: [www.aacabwa.org](http://www.aacabwa.org)

**Registration Deadline: June 1, 2024**

[www.aacabwa.org](http://www.aacabwa.org)

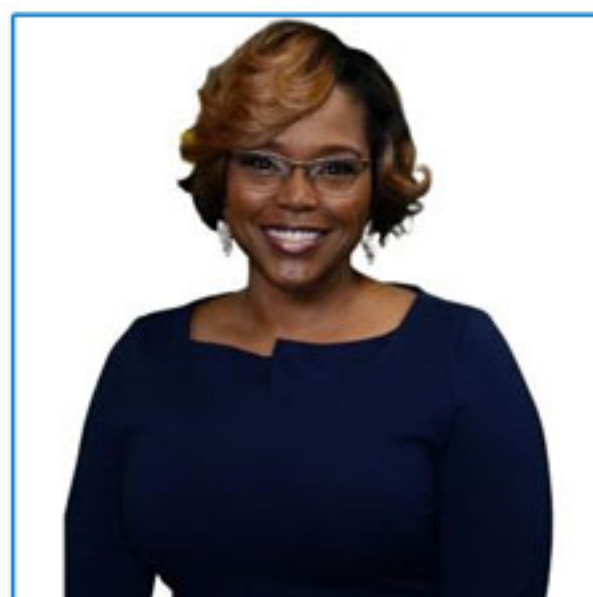


## Atlanta Area Council Presents



### Chata Spikes

Executive Director of Public Affairs for the Atlanta Police Department



**Meeting Date:** Saturday, April 27, 2024  
**Meeting Time:** 11:00am - 2:00pm  
**Networking Time:** 10:30am  
**Call To Order:** 11:00am  
**Contact:** Carolyn Parks

We look forward to seeing you there!

Chata Spikes is an Atlanta native who loves God, family, people, and laughter. She has a unique ability to make others smile and help them understand what makes them great. She often says, "Stick with me and I'll have you believing in yourself!"

As the Executive Director of Public Affairs for the Atlanta Police Department, Chata Spikes manages the department's overall communication strategy which includes developing organizational messaging both internal and external. She also serves as the Public Affairs Director for the Atlanta City Detention Center and Public Safety Spokesperson for the Mayor's Office of Communications.

She owns and operates, Spiked Communications, LLC, a communications/leadership consulting firm specializing in media, leadership, and customer service training for diverse audiences to include schools, churches, and government entities.

She is an active member of Salem Bible Church and a charter member of the Alpha Beta Omega Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

### CONDOLENCES

Sympathy goes out to Trina Nkhazi who recently lost her father. Cards can be sent to:

Ali and Trina Nkhazi  
 835 Stonehaven Road SW  
 Atlanta, GA, 30331

Our prayers are also with Deborah Johnson-Blake as she grieves the loss of her mother several weeks ago.

Gwen Williams lost her mother. Let's shower her with expressions of comfort at:

Gwen Williams  
 1377 Lynford Dr. SW  
 Atlanta, GA 30310



**Atlanta Area Council**  
American Business Women's Association

44th ANNUAL  
DISTRICT I VP CELEBRATION



*Honoring*  
***Sonya Woods-Lowe***

2023-2024  
District I Vice President

**LIVE Event**

**July 26 -27, 2024**

Hilton Atlanta Airport Hotel  
1031 Virginia Avenue Hapeville, GA 30354

Friday, July 26<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Welcome Reception & Meet the DIVP Candidates- Casual attire

Saturday Morning Forum – 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM. Business attire

Saturday Luncheon – 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Registration Now Open!**

Registration \$130 (Includes all Events)

**Attire: Business/Colors Red & Black**

**District I Vice President Celebration**

Register and Pay online at [www.aacabwa.org](http://www.aacabwa.org)

Hotel reservation link coming soon. Contact Carolyn Parks

[cparks.abwa@gmail.com](mailto:cparks.abwa@gmail.com) or Delsonia Chappell [deechappell@hotmail.com](mailto:deechappell@hotmail.com)

*find unity in*  
**COMMUNITY**

AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

1949 - 2024

ABWA's 75th Year Membership Campaign  
 MARCH 1 – JUNE 30

CELEBRATING UNITY AND EMPOWERMENT

2024 marks the 75th Anniversary of **The American Business Women's Association**, a pioneering force in advancing women's roles in business. This year, we proudly introduce our theme, "*Find Unity in Community*," highlighting our commitment to fostering collaboration, support, and collective advancement among professional women.

UNITE AND THRIVE: Exclusive Rewards for Championing Membership Growth in Our 'Find Unity in Community' Association

Spread the word about the benefits of joining ABWA and invite others to join our incredible community. We are offering two exclusive rewards when you enroll one or more new members.

LEVEL ONE

RECRUIT ONE NEW MEMBER

Receive a limited-edition, 1-1/8" round Anniversary Pin trimmed with red rhinestones. This pin commemorates ABWA's 75 years as an Association for working women and women business owners, and is a symbol of your contribution to our legacy of *Changing Women's Lives... One Woman at a Time.*™

pin shown larger than actual size



LEVEL TWO

RECRUIT THREE OR MORE NEW MEMBERS

Let all of your worries slip away with a warm bath and rejuvenating products, including bubble bath, white tea bath salts, bath fizzers, and more. You can continue the TLC treatment with refreshing white tea shower gel, body lotion, and body mist. Your ultimate day of relaxation is waiting for you when you recruit three or more new members.



# MEET THE CANDIDATES for ABWA'S NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS/SBMEF TRUSTEES



## Candidates for National President



**GENICE HALL-FOWLER**  
Women Connecting Women Chapter  
• member since 2012 •  
Campaign Team:  
Anna Davis, Robyn Summers & Linda Hough-Hicks



**ANNE O'NEILL**  
Harris County Charter Chapter  
• member since 2001 •  
Campaign Team:  
Sharon Godbee

## Candidates for National Vice President



**VELMA LANDERS**  
Enterprising Women Networking SF Chapter  
• member since 2016 •  
Campaign Team:  
Maxine Wilson, Jo' Vel Jones, Pamela Booker & Anassa Stewart



**SONYA LOWE**  
Golden Dome Chapter  
• member since 2009 •  
Campaign Team:  
Teresa Williams & Retoin George



**KIM STENDEL**  
Women of Vision Express Network  
• member since 2017 •  
Campaign Team:  
Kitty Peed Pike & Nanell Mawbey





Candidates for National Secretary-Treasurer



BARBARA PEDERSEN

Heart of the Piedmont Chapter  
• member since 2004 •

Campaign Team:  
Robin Necci & Terry Howard



CHERYL SCHMANDT

Women of Magnitude Express Network  
• member since 2018 •

Campaign Team:  
Tracy Sweet & Leigh Roberson



DEBRA WEILBACHER

Dynamic Connections Chapter  
• member since 2006 •

Campaign Team:  
Stacy Arnold

District 1

Vice President Candidate



DIOR DAVIS

Airport Charter Chapter  
• member since 2021 •

Campaign Team:  
Terrill McFarland, Gwen Williams, Brenda Wyatt & Stephanie Johnson

District 2

Vice President Candidates



KRISTENA HACKETT

Humble Artesian Chapter  
• member since 2015 •

Campaign Team:  
Carol Nagel



KRISTINA PEREZ

Cy-Fair Express Network  
• member since 2015 •

Campaign Team:  
NaTasha Vaughn





**District 3**

Vice President Candidate



**EILEEN CASPERS**  
Ad Astra Chapter  
• member since 2008 •  
Campaign Team:  
Elaine Boose &  
Nancy Griffin

**District 4**

Vice President Candidates



**MICHELLE  
FERGUSON-MILLER**  
Forsyth Chapter  
• member since 2003 •  
Campaign Team:  
Elisa Wells



**DR. TRACEY G.  
JACKSON**  
Oxon Hill Charter  
Chapter  
• member since 2007 •  
Campaign Team:  
Delores McClain

**District 5**

Vice President Candidate



**RENEE CLEMENT**  
Gem City Chapter  
• member since 2018 •  
Campaign Team:  
Elaine Study

**District 6**

Vice President Candidates



**KAREN FITTING**  
Pathfinder Chapter  
• member since 2018 •  
Campaign Team:  
Karen Oliver, Barbara  
Jenkins & Amy Dawson



**ADRIENNE JACKSON  
WRIGHT**  
Wind Song Charter  
Chapter  
• member since 2017 •  
Campaign Team:  
Kathy Bothe, Bella Samel  
& JoAnn Osby





• TIME TO PLAN YOUR TRIP •  
COME HOME TO ABWA!

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NATIONAL  
WOMEN'S  
LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE

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SEPTEMBER  
25th-28th  
• 2024 •  
Overland Park  
KANSAS

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AMERICAN  
BUSINESS  
WOMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION

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Book Your Room Reservations at the  
Hilton Garden Inn 913-345-2661  
5800 College Blvd. Overland Park, KS