



MILESTONES ELEVATION
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



BLACK WOMENS
2025
CELEBRATION

table of contents.

Welcome to the
SISTERFRIENDS

Story Behind International
Black Womens History Month

Message from M.E.

Our Chapetr in HER Story

Proclamation for Black
Womens History Month

Our Legacy

Award Categories &
Descriptions

Nominee Bio's

I AM SHE

Being HER Energy

Community Impact



SISTERFRIENDS

Sisterfriends DMV is a thriving online community of over 700 women dedicated to creating safe, sacred spaces where Black women can thrive—mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and financially. More than just a network, it is a sisterhood where vulnerability is honored, stories are shared, and purpose is activated. Through daily encouragement, meaningful dialogue, and impactful events, Sisterfriends empowers women to walk in truth, build legacy, and support one another through every season of life. This space reflects the heart of Milestones Elevation Community Development's mission—where SHE Builds. SHE Leads. SHE Thrives.

Lets Welcome NEW SISTERFRIENDS to the safe space for women.

Panelist Spotlight: Noémie Gaines – Storyteller, Strategist, Soft Power Advocate

Noémie Gaines is a dynamic force whose journey from entertainment attorney to transformational storyteller aligns powerfully with MECD's vision of empowerment, education, and emotional clarity. Through her work on Simmer Down Diaries and Sit Down Talk, she reclaims narrative, encourages transparency, and reminds women that their presence—not performance—is their greatest power. Noémie's focus on legacy, leadership, and self-definition mirrors the essence of Black Women's History Month: honoring the multifaceted journeys of Black women who continue to break cycles, build community, and lead with grace. She is not only a voice for the modern Black woman—she is a mirror reflecting the healing, honesty, and hope we all deserve.



SISTERFRIENDS

The Sisterfriends community is a powerhouse of talent, resources, and lived experiences—overflowing with women who are building legacy, uplifting others, and redefining what success looks like. With over 700 active members, we're proud to introduce the Sisterfriends Network Directory: a curated listing of professionals, creatives, and community leaders within our circle. This directory offers trusted access to businesses and services by Black women, for Black women—making it easier to connect, support, and thrive together. Our host tonight is a shining example of what the Sisterfriends community and this directory represent.

Host Spotlight: LaVondra Shinholster, The Typical BlaQueen

LaVondra Shinholster is a DMV-based Lifestyle Influencer, content creator, and public figure who embodies the everyday excellence of Black womanhood. As a mother of three boys, she captivates her audience with real, relatable, and refreshing content covering topics like self-healing, beauty, fitness, love, and motherhood. Through her brand Typical BlaQueen, LaVondra celebrates the strength, grace, and resilience of Black women who wear countless hats while still shining brilliantly. Her work mirrors the mission of Milestones Elevation Community Development—uplifting underrepresented voices, building authentic relationships, and creating platforms where Black women are seen, supported, and empowered to thrive. LaVondra doesn't just tell stories—she lives one worth honoring. She is Black Women's History in the making.
SHE Builds. SHE Leads. SHE Thrives.





Black Women's History Month

Brilliant. Bold. Beautiful.

Recognizing HERStory
Est. 2016

International Black Women's History Month (IBWHM), founded by Sha Battle in 2016, is a global initiative dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the achievements of Black women across the African diaspora. Battle, an entrepreneur and IT consultant, envisioned a month that specifically honors the contributions of Black women in various fields, from domestic engineering to politics and entrepreneurship. She established April as IBWHM to fill the gap left by traditional Black History and Women's History months, ensuring that the unique experiences and accomplishments of Black women receive the recognition they deserve.



The theme for IBWHM 2025 is "Black Women: Continuing The Fight For Equity, Knowing Our Worth, Trusting Our GOD." This theme underscores the ongoing struggle for equality, the importance of self-worth, and the role of faith in empowering Black women. It serves as a call to action to continue advocating for social, economic, and political justice while embracing the inherent value and spiritual strength that Black women possess.



A Message from Milestones Elevation Community Development

At Milestones Elevation Community Development (MECD), we believe that every woman carries the power to transform generations. It is with deep gratitude and purpose that we welcome you to Elevate HER: The Legacy Lounge Experience. This evening is more than a celebration—it is a declaration. A declaration that Black women are worthy of recognition, luxury, access, healing, and above all—legacy. As we gather to honor the brilliance and resilience of our sisters, we reaffirm our commitment to education, economic growth, equitable opportunity, and the power of meaningful relationships.

Founded with a vision to change the narrative for underrepresented communities, MECD is not just building programs—we're building futures. We see legacy not as something distant, but something alive in every woman who dares to lead, serve, and thrive. Tonight, we crown those women. And we invite you to continue walking alongside us in this journey of transformation and elevation.

HERSTORY

In the spirit of honoring what has always been overlooked, MECD has launched a statewide initiative to formally recognize April as Black Women's History Month in Maryland. Through our "Crown Her County" campaign, we are actively working with local leaders including Councilman Edward Burroughs and the office of Governor Wes Moore to bring this vision to life. This campaign not only celebrates the historical contributions of Black women, but also aims to create lasting visibility, access to resources, and systemic recognition for generations to come.



Our goal is simple but powerful: to ensure that the legacies of Black women are not confined to moments, but honored through policy, platforms, and programs. We believe that legislative acknowledgment is a necessary step in shifting culture and securing equity. By advocating for this designation, we hope to elevate HERstory—not just in celebration, but in civic reality.

OUR ACTION

State Proclamation

WHEREAS, Milestones Elevation Community Development is dedicated to empowering underserved communities through education, economic growth, strong relationships, and equitable opportunities, with a special focus on celebrating and uplifting the contributions of African American women; and

WHEREAS, Black Women's History Month is a time to recognize and applaud the achievements that African American women have made to society, honoring their resilience, creativity, and leadership across various disciplines; and

WHEREAS, the State of Maryland is home to many talented women whose accomplishments span a wide range of fields and reflect a rich diversity of cultural and ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, these women, through their intelligence, imagination, sense of wonder, and tenacity, have made extraordinary contributions to American society, shaping the ways in which we live, work, and thrive; and

WHEREAS, LaToya Ball, Founder and Executive Director of Milestones Elevation Community Development, calls upon the State of Maryland and Maryland State Governor, Wes Moore to join in celebrating the entire month of April as Black Women's History Month; and

WHEREAS, this celebration seeks to honor the countless generations of Black women who have excelled in life and professional disciplines, and to reflect on their significant contributions to the advancement of society; and

WHEREAS, this month-long observance will bring together women from all fields to reflect on and celebrate their accomplishments, inspiring future generations to pursue excellence in every area of life; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge with great appreciation the phenomenal contributions of Black women, whose daily efforts continue to make the world a better place for everyone;

NOW, THEREFORE, Governor of the State of Maryland, do hereby proclaim April as Black Women's History Month in the State of Maryland and encourage all citizens to join in celebrating the invaluable contributions of Black women to our society.



OUR LEGACY

We stand today as sisters, as storytellers, as leaders—

Honoring the legacy of every Black woman who has fought, built, nurtured, and risen.

We are HERstory in motion.

From boardrooms to classrooms, from our homes to our healing spaces—

We are the brilliance, the resilience, and the backbone of our communities.

We acknowledge our power,

We carry the mission forward:

To educate, to empower, to build generational wealth, and to cultivate relationships that restore.

We call upon the world to recognize and celebrate the worth, the work, and the wellness of Black women.

And we commit to showing up—for ourselves, and for each other.

Together, we declare:

✨ She Builds. She Leads. She Thrives. ✨

CROWN HER COUNTY

1. The Crown Her Legacy Crown

For a lifetime of transformative service and leadership that uplifts Black women and entire communities.

2. The W.E.A.L.T.H. Builder Crown

For creating pathways to generational wealth through business, finance, or financial education.

3. The SHE Leads Crown

For bold leadership in government, nonprofit, education, or public service that reflects integrity and vision.

4. The Community Roots Crown

For grassroots advocacy and on-the-ground impact that strengthens neighborhoods and inspires unity.

5. The Sisterhood in Action Crown

For fostering healing, support, and connection among Black women through intentional relationship-building.

6. The Rising Crown

For a young woman under 30 who is shaping the future with innovation, drive, and fearless leadership.

7. The Healing Her Crown

For advancing the emotional, physical, or mental well-being of Black women through wellness, advocacy, or care.





Tanisha Murden



Qiana Johnson



Tamika Paige



Rasheeda Jamison

CROWN HER LEGACY

Qiana Johnson is a transformative leader and the founder of Life After Release, Inc., a DMV-based organization led by formerly incarcerated women. Her advocacy challenges the injustices of post-conviction sentencing and seeks to dismantle the systems that uphold mass incarceration. A proud member of the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, Qiana uses her story to empower others and demand accountability from public institutions. Her work in abolition, participatory defense, and public safety reform serves as a beacon for restorative justice. She is building a legacy rooted in liberation, equity, and the belief that everyone deserves a chance to thrive. IG: @lifeafterrelease

Tamika Paige is a powerhouse of purpose and the visionary behind the Paige Group Foundation, a nonprofit organization rooted in service, sisterhood, and sustainable impact. Through her leadership, she has created safe, empowering spaces for women to heal, grow, and build wealth—spiritually, emotionally, and economically. Tamika is also the co-founder of the SHE Suite Pantry & Resource Hub, a luxury space meeting critical community needs with dignity and care. Her lifelong mission is to secure the whole woman and ensure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of legacy. Tamika leads with compassion, courage, and an unshakable commitment to community transformation. IG: @paigegroupfoundation



Tanisha Murden



Qiana Johnson



Tamika Paige



Rasheeda Jamison

CROWN HER LEGACY

Rasheeda Jamison is the Executive Director of United Communities Against Poverty (UCAP), where she leads with conviction, compassion, and community-first leadership. Her work centers on addressing poverty and systemic barriers with sustainable solutions that uplift families across Prince George's County. Rasheeda's dedication to housing, workforce development, and economic empowerment has transformed lives and neighborhoods. She is a champion for equity and opportunity, serving as both a servant leader and strategic visionary. Her leadership reflects the power of purpose and a deep-rooted commitment to justice and change. IG: @ucappgc

Kimberly Booker

Tanisha Murden is a motivational speaker, mentor, and life coach who has turned pain into purpose. A survivor of trauma and incarceration, Tanisha has rebuilt her life through education, leadership, and service. She is a founding member of The WIRE and founder of Unity & Faith LLC, helping formerly incarcerated women navigate reentry with dignity and hope. Appointed by Mayor Muriel Bowser to the Commission on Reentry and Returning Citizen Affairs, Tanisha has been a fierce advocate for justice, healing, and second chances. Her voice, strength, and testimony inspire countless others to rise, rebuild, and reclaim their power.

IG: @tanishamurden



W.E.A.L.T.H. BUILDER

Sabrina Grimes is a powerhouse in financial services and a beacon of hope for families seeking financial freedom and generational change. Known for her unmatched compassion, she equips her clients and community with the tools they need to grow, protect, and sustain wealth. Her work spans financial literacy education, life planning, and travel consulting—all rooted in her mission to educate and elevate every household she touches. Sabrina's unwavering commitment to care, excellence, and empowerment continues to shift lives and uplift futures across Prince George's County and beyond. She is a true leader who serves with heart, knowledge, and purpose. FB: Sabrina Powers

Tracy Arnold is the visionary founder of Arnold's Place, a community-driven organization that empowers individuals and families through financial education, housing support, and holistic resources. With a heart for healing and a mind for strategy, Tracy has created pathways to homeownership and stability for those often left behind. Her commitment to building generational wealth is evident in the lives she touches—offering not just services, but sustainable solutions. Tracy's leadership reflects the core values of empowerment, equity, and elevation, making her a powerful force in the movement to close wealth gaps and strengthen communities. She is not just building places—she's building legacies. IG:tracylarnold



SHE LEADS



Katrine Dixon Patterson



Kimberly Booker



Jackie Rhone

Jackie Rhone has been a steadfast advocate for community equity and support across Prince George's County. Her work reflects a deep commitment to service, access, and uplifting families through compassionate leadership. Jackie is a connector, mentor, and force for good within county government and beyond. Her presence in this work ensures that every voice—especially those often unheard—is valued and protected. We honor her unwavering dedication to advancing inclusive and community-centered public service. LinkedIn: Jacqueline Rhone

Mrs. Katrina Dixon Patterson's leadership is both dynamic and deeply rooted in justice, advocacy, and inclusion. Her work spans from shaping disability policies in Washington D.C. to serving as County Commissioner for the Prince George's County Commission for Individuals with Disabilities and as a Board Trustee for the Maryland School for the Deaf. Whether in boardrooms or grassroots meetings, Katrina champions access, equity, and empowerment with unwavering grace. Her commitment to collaboration, education, and community makes her a true architect of change and legacy.

Instagram: @princess_kdix

Kimberly Booker is the embodiment of resilience, compassion, and lifelong service. From organizing citywide service projects at age 11 to building award-winning programs for children of incarcerated parents, Kimberly's nearly 50 years of advocacy span youth leadership, public safety, healthcare equity, and breast cancer awareness. A two-time cancer warrior, certified Homeland Security safety expert, and community college professor, Kimberly has impacted thousands through mentoring, fundraising, and policy work. Her legacy is one of unshakable faith, generational empowerment, and purpose-driven love for community. IG: @thechangeagent



Latrina Robinson



Montree Dupree



Shanita Brown



Gina Wilson

COMMUNITY ROOTS

Latrina Robinson is a beacon of impact in the Suitland community, where she owns and operates both Shadyside Food Mart and Unique Looks Salon and Barbershop. Her businesses provide not only essential goods and services, but also a safe and welcoming space for all. Through her innovative Snack & Read program, children receive free books with every snack purchased—nurturing both their minds and hearts. Latrina invests in local talent, offering platforms for top stylists and barbers to grow and give back. Her daily commitment to building up Suitland from the inside out makes her a true community cornerstone. IG: shadysidefoodmart

Montree Dupree is a devoted grassroots leader whose passion for people is evident in every initiative she touches. With a focus on youth, families, and community wellness, Montree works at the intersection of advocacy and action—supporting everything from foster care and food security to mental health and workforce development. Her hands-on leadership style ensures lasting impact, empowering residents through direct resources and unwavering support. Montree's commitment to uplifting her community with love, consistency, and purpose makes her a powerful example of grassroots excellence. She truly embodies what it means to be rooted in the people. Facebook: Montre' Dupree (Yatisa)

Kimberly Booker



Latrina Robinson



Montree Dupree



Shanita Brown



Gina Wilson

COMMUNITY ROOTS

Shanita Brown is a tireless advocate and founder of A Gift of Love, a nonprofit that pours compassion and care into the senior citizens of Prince George's County. Through her heartfelt initiatives—from annual sock drives to toiletry giveaways and senior appreciation events—Shanita ensures that our elders are never forgotten. She brings joy to nursing homes, fights for transportation access, and builds bridges of support rooted in dignity and love. Shanita's unwavering passion for uplifting seniors through advocacy, celebration, and connection has transformed the way our community values its elders. She is the heartbeat of service and legacy. IG: ssbcreations_agol

For over 15 years, Gina Wilson has been a driving force behind grassroots sports programs, helping hundreds of student athletes earn college scholarships through her tireless recruitment efforts. Founder of a youth-centered foundation, Gina supports families with the financial burdens of sports travel and development, opening doors for the next generation of leaders. Her community outreach extends to partnerships with organizations like Feed It Forward, Covenant House, and Capital Food Bank—proving her impact goes far beyond the court. Gina's vision, leadership, and unwavering commitment to youth empowerment make her a pillar of hope and opportunity. IG: msgina_w

SISTERHOOD IN ACTION



Tasha Berry



LaToya Ball



Latoya Hustle

Dr. Tasha Berry is more than a business powerhouse—she’s a sisterhood cultivator whose life’s work empowers women to rise with purpose, strength, and strategy. Through her leadership of the Phoenix Reintegration Project and Tasha Berry Consulting, she offers women second chances, tools for economic freedom, and mentorship rooted in real-world experience. Dr. Berry leads with authenticity, walking alongside others as they heal, build, and thrive. Her commitment to uplifting women—whether returning citizens, entrepreneurs, or everyday visionaries—demonstrates the power of leading with both intellect and compassion. Tasha’s legacy is one of radical support, deep impact, and unwavering sisterhood. IG: [drtashaberry](#)

LaToya Ball is a visionary leader and founder of Milestones Elevation Community Development, whose work is rooted in building sustainable sisterhood, opportunity, and impact. Through initiatives like the SHE Suite Pantry & Resource Hub and her commitment to economic succession, LaToya creates spaces where women can thrive—emotionally, financially, and personally. Her mission is centered on equipping queens with the tools, access, and education needed to lead lives of purpose and legacy. From policy advocacy to everyday mentorship, LaToya embodies what it means to elevate others through action, love, and leadership. She is a quiet storm of transformation, always leading with grace and intention. IG: [@m_then_e](#)

Known affectionately as “The Unicorn,” Toya Hustle is a force of nature whose presence uplifts and heals every space she enters. As co-founder of Break N Loose, she has created a sacred community where women are free to laugh, cry, decompress, and grow—without judgment and full of love. Toya walks through her community with heart-led purpose, offering authenticity, wisdom, and powerful support to everyone she encounters. Her gift lies in creating trust and comfort, forging bonds that turn strangers into sisters. Toya is the heartbeat of empowerment—fierce, nurturing, and deeply committed to reminding women of their worth. IG: [breaknlooseladies](#)



RISING CROWN

At just 11 years old, Cailyn Davis founded BETA IOTA IOTA BETA, Inc., a nonprofit youth sorority aimed at fostering sisterhood and combating bullying among girls. Prior to this, at the age of 7, she initiated the Beauty Is In The Books book club, promoting literacy and empowerment. Cailyn's mission is to create safe spaces where girls can build healthy friendships and support one another. Her leadership and dedication to uplifting young girls have made a significant impact in her community, inspiring others to lead with kindness and purpose. IG: @BETA_IOTA_IOTA_BETA_INC

Tamara Davis exemplifies resilience and entrepreneurial spirit as a young Black woman dedicated to her passions. An HBCU graduate, she has successfully established herself in the hair industry, promoting not only beauty but also financial independence for herself and her future. Beyond her entrepreneurial endeavors, Tamara has discovered a profound love for developmental education, working with children on the autism spectrum. Her commitment to both her craft and her community showcases her multifaceted talents and unwavering dedication to making a positive impact. IG@TMONAE.STYLZZ



HEALING HER



Coach Ella Destiny



Chawnice Boomer



Tiffani Evans

Coach Ella Destiny is a certified life coach, international speaker, and women's health advocate whose personal journey of surviving a life-threatening aneurysm has fueled her mission to empower others. Through her platform, she raises awareness about fibroids and mental health, offering support and education to women navigating similar challenges. As the host of the "So What Wednesdays" podcast, Coach Ella fosters candid conversations that inspire resilience and self-discovery. Her unwavering commitment to holistic well-being and spiritual growth has made her a beacon of hope for many women seeking healing and purpose. FB: @Ella Destiny

Chawnice Boomer is a dedicated advocate for women's empowerment, guiding individuals to embrace their worth and heal from within. Through her faith-driven approach, she helps women break cycles, restore confidence, and ignite their purpose. Chawnice's personal journey of overcoming trauma has become a source of inspiration, as she shares her testimony to uplift others. Her compassionate leadership and commitment to community service have made her a transformative figure in the lives of many women. IG: @CHAWNICE_BOOMER

Tiffani Evans, known as the "Gracefully Spoken" advocate, channels her faith and personal tragedy into a powerful force against gun violence. After the loss of her son, she founded the IamPJ Foundation and co-founded S.A.M. (Strong Azz Mothers), providing support to parents and youth affected by trauma. Featured on national platforms like Inside Edition, Tiffani uses her voice to preserve her son's legacy and advocate for change. Her work as a violence interrupter and proponent of Cognitive Behavioral Theory underscores her belief in transforming pain into purpose. IG: @iam_lnae



I AM S.H.E.

S.H.E. SUITE LUXURY PANTRY & TRAINING RESOURCE HUB

The SHE Suite Luxury Pantry was created as more than a place to pick up essentials—it is a dignified, welcoming experience designed to nourish the whole woman. At its core, the pantry reflects our belief that every woman deserves access to fresh, healthy food and wellness products in a space that honors her worth. Rooted in our mission to restore legacy through equity and empowerment, the pantry serves as a sanctuary for women and families who may be facing food insecurity, yet deserve to feel seen, celebrated, and supported. Here, SHE Builds her foundation, SHE Leads her household with strength, and SHE Thrives with the resources and respect she deserves.

The SHE Suite Resource Hub is a space where transformation begins—through education, mentorship, and opportunity. Designed to equip women with the tools needed for financial independence, career development, and emotional wellness, the hub embodies our mission to foster economic growth and lasting impact. From business training and workforce development to emotional intelligence and personal coaching, this space is committed to creating pathways that lead to stability and success. It is here that SHE Builds her vision, SHE Leads with purpose, and SHE Thrives as the architect of her legacy.

Donate to the Pantry Here





BEING THE ENERGY

Affirmation:

I am the standard. I walk with purpose, grace, and power—because I know who I am and what I carry. I do not shrink, I do not settle, and I do not apologize for the light I bring into every room. I am HER energy—bold, brilliant, and becoming. By holding myself to the highest standard, I require those around me to rise with me. I elevate by example, and everywhere I go, I leave a legacy of love, excellence, and truth.

Over the last five years, my sistars—more than friends, more than family—have poured into me with love, accountability, and truth. They've shown me what it means to rise while rooted, to grow without forgetting, and to shine without dimming others. The power of our sisterhood has transformed every part of me.

Because of them, I no longer question my crown—I adjust it. And now, I stand before you not only as a woman but as a confident queen, called to lead, love, and lift others along the way. Together, we've shown that healing is holy, legacy is loud, and sisterhood is sacred.

To every Black woman reading this: you are stunning. Not just in appearance, but in essence. You are God's masterpiece—crafted with intention, layered with resilience, and lit with divine purpose. The world may try to weigh you down, but you were built to rise. It is your responsibility to elevate everything around you—your home, your name, your community—but never forget who you are. Do not lose yourself in the service of others. Be anchored in your truth, drenched in your faith, and firm in your identity. You are the answer to someone's prayer. You are the light in someone's darkness. And you are HER—the woman you prayed to become.

SHE Builds. SHE Leads. SHE Thrives.

Community Impact



MILESTONES ELEVATION
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



www.educateempowership.org



latoya@mecdevelopment.org

Thank you

Special Thank You to Our Incredible Vendors

First and always, I thank God for ordering my steps, covering every detail, and allowing me to carry out this vision with grace.

To my man, my man, my man—the incredible Mr. Frankie Ball—your love is my fuel. Thank you for standing beside me, lifting me up, and supporting Black women without hesitation.

To my babies—thank you for your patience, for giving me the space to dream, and for letting me build. I'm grateful to stand on your love and pour into something greater, knowing I always have home behind me.

To those Queens that cover me, my mother, my daughter, and my mother-in-love—thank you for being the foundation of my legacy and the future of it. I stand tall because you have poured into me, and I'm honored to walk beside and behind women like you.

To my sisters in purpose, Tamika Paige and Toya Hustle—thank you for standing firmly on sisterhood, faith, and friendship. You are the prototype of Black queens: brilliant, bold, and built for this. Your business savvy is unmatched, and your true beauty radiates from the inside out. And, to every woman present—thank you for your commitment to community, to wealth, and to legacy. You are crowned with purpose and power.

To the team—you are the heartbeat of this movement. Every detail, every late-night planning session, every prayer mattered. This doesn't happen without you.

To our incredible vendors, you brought this experience to life. Your professionalism, creativity, and commitment made this space everything we dreamed it could be and more. You weren't just booked—you were chosen to be part of something sacred.

With deepest gratitude to:

- Creative St. Loft
- Alicia Dalton
- LaVondra Shinholster
- Noe'mie Gaines
- Elite Creations by Thrisha
- Lai the Foundation
- Jasmin
- Brandy
- LaDarius Gardener
- DJ Shane
- Taniah

Thank you for helping us show what it looks like when SHE Builds. SHE Leads. SHE Thrives.

With love and legacy,

LaToya Ball

Founder, Milestones Elevation Community Development

SHE Builds. SHE Leads. SHE Thrives.