

Winter 2015

*"Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew."*

*~Cicely Tyson*



## President's Message



### *Networking: How Essential Is It Anyway?*

*"Networking Like a Boss" is one of my favorite AABLI Board Leadership Program sessions. Facilitated by our faculty member Brickson Diamond, it reveals much about the strategy that landed him on the Brown University board of trustees. It entailed building the right relationships and giving of his time, talent and treasure. In short, he "networked like a boss."*

*We should never underestimate the power of networking. The people with whom we spend time largely determine the opportunities that become available to us. Unfortunately, the more technologically advanced we become, the more we seem to distance ourselves from developing and maintaining solid relationships. Networking strictly through social media simply can't replace face-to-face communication.*

*Don't get me wrong. Obviously, we can integrate technology and social media to polish relationships and stay connected. But the more "up close and personal" interaction there is, the greater our chances are of connecting with people emotionally.*

*Connecting emotionally means learning to listen actively, to accept people for who they are, to value and respect them as individuals. This is the strategy Brickson Diamond urges others to internalize.*

*Don't forget, however, that positive networking is not just about you and your next career move; it's about paying it forward. Engineer a helpful introduction. Share information. Do a colleague or new friend a favor.*

*In this way, your networking opportunities will climb to a new level and we will applaud as we watch you grow.*

*Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a bright New Year!*

*Yvette*



## "Networking Like a Boss" Faculty Office Hours



*AABLI faculty member Brickson Diamond is the chief operating officer (COO) of the Executive Leadership Council (ELC), a national organization comprised of current and former African American CEOs and senior executives at Fortune 500 and equivalent companies. Mr. Diamond shares his knowledge of the fundamentals of fundraising, shedding new light on how to make the all-important "ask."*

Mastering the art of networking is serious business. During our AABLI Board Leadership Program (BLP) exercises and discussion, there is not enough time to dig deeply into the nuances of networking, engrossed as we are in expanding our universe of relationships, advancing the causes about which we are passionate and elevating the work of the organizations that express our greatest passions. In this brief entry I will touch on all of these more meaningfully than time allows during our session. This should serve both as a great preview for those considering an AABLI Board Leadership Program and as a moment of greater reflection for our alumni. (visit our website or [Read more here...](#))



Congratulations to our recent graduates!  
Class # 8 - November 6 & 7, 2015



Photo by Leroy Hamilton

[Click here to see more photos](#)

A heartfelt welcome to our latest graduating cohort, Class # 8! As members of the AABLI family, you will enjoy a lasting connection with some of the most dynamic and engaging people in the nation: our AABLI alumni.

Warmly,  
Katarina Eleby  
Manager, Programs & Operations



Earn Your Certificate in Board Governance.  
*Listen and learn why you should attend.*





## REAL TALK: Why Change If Everything's Working?



*Thyonne Gordon, Ph.D., is an accomplished social profit management expert and writer. Her work with 501c3 organizations has enhanced the not-for-profit sector with on-purpose success through her proven technique, called S.T.O.R.Y.™ (Structure, Target, Ownership, Relatability and YOU). Using this technique for creating growth-oriented businesses, strong board governance, productive teams and sustainable fundraising strategies in the 501c3 arena, Dr. Gordon has empowered hundreds of organizations nationwide. She is also an AABLI alum, Class # 3.*

If we take the same route every day and it works-why change? The same applies in our business lives: "Why fix it if it ain't broke?"



Another route might be more scenic, but unless we're willing to shake up our routine, we

can miss a fantastic view of the lake and the mountains.

In business, shaking things up is a lot more difficult. Most change is met with resistance.

Resistance can be as subtle as procrastination or as distressing as an outright rebellion. In any event, when things are working well, change seems illogical. I've found, however [\[read more here...\]](#)



## Get Social!



*Monique Stennis is the social media manager for the University of Redlands. She is responsible for the day-to-day management of social media campaigns. Stennis, an AABLI alumna, Class #6, also develops informative content and interesting facts to create online brand awareness for seniors and baby boomers.*

LinkedIn is a far cry from the professional website introduced to me in 2008 by former co-workers. They touted the site as an amazing place to spotlight accomplishments found on my résumé and connect with a range of professionals. It is a platform, they said, where former colleagues/employers can write firsthand recommendations about their professional experiences with me. [Read more...](#)



## Spotlights



Loren M. Hill, Ph.D. - Class # 6  
Professor of Psychology and  
Director, Forensic Training Institute

[The Chicago School of Professional Psychology](#)

Dr. Hill shares her personal story with us.



[The Academy of Science and Engineering Charter High School](#)

Cynthia Amos, the Director of Instruction for the Academy of Science and Engineering Charter High School, wrote the following:

"When AABLI board member Eugene Boykins approached me about looking into AABLI, I have to admit I was somewhat hesitant to revisit board leadership opportunities. My previous board experiences had been less than satisfying, so I wasn't sure I wanted to get involved. After giving it some thought, however, I decided to attend a workshop or two to get a sense of the organization. The workshops I attended were impressive. The AABLI representatives were warm and welcoming, the panelists were outstanding and the information was timely and relevant. So it didn't take long to make my decision to attend the AABLI Board Leadership Program. I felt so strongly about the program that I invited two colleagues, Monique Stennis, MBA, and Yvonne D. Styles, Ph.D., to join me and they did. It was clear that the courses and curriculum were well developed by the faculty. I remember thinking, "If I'd had this information when I served on the previous boards, my experiences would have been much different."

By the end of the program, I felt better equipped for board leadership. As a result, I was determined to actively seek opportunities for service. I was further impressed when I received an email with a number of specially selected boards that AABLI suggested would match my interest, particularly since the selections matched many of those I had picked. The entire process - from attending the Board Leadership Program to my board appointment was fairly rapid. I attended the program in April 2015 and was elected to the Academy of Science & Engineering Board in June 2015. So I became an AABLI alumni and a board member in less than three months. I wonder if that sets some kind of record?

The board, staff, and faculty clearly embody the mission and vision of AABLI. I am honored that I was encouraged to join this organization."

"We were first introduced to Dr. Loren M. Hill via email when she contacted me regarding a potential board candidacy. After reviewing Dr. Hill's impressive resume, I immediately shared her information with our Principal and Director of Administration. Together, the three of us contacted Loren. We referred her to our website so she could get an idea of our mission, vision, and school culture. We ended the conversation with "After you've viewed our website, contact us if you are still interested in being considered." We waited with bated breath. Within a week, Dr. Hill reached out to me to schedule a luncheon meeting. ASE administration met with Dr. Hill. At the conclusion of the luncheon, which lasted three hours, we felt Dr. Hill would be an excellent addition to our board. Dr. Hill next attended a "Meet and Greet" with the entire ASE Board. At the next regularly scheduled ASE Board Meeting, Dr. Hill was unanimously voted onto the ASE Board of Directors. Dr. Hill's vast knowledge and expertise have proven to be a much-needed "shot in the arm" for our board, as well as for our school. The students at ASE are very fortunate to have Dr. Hill as an ally and advocate."

*The Academy of Science and Engineering (ASE) is a Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) pathways charter high school, located in south central Los Angeles. Its mission is to graduate students who possess a blend of strong academic and workplace competencies necessary for entering college or high-level technical fields to become productive workers and successful citizens. We currently serve 250 neighborhood students. ASE works in conjunction with West Los Angeles College so that our students have the opportunity to truly graduate "College Ready, Career Prepared."*



## Our Educational Leadership Series

Pathways to Corporate Boards  
Wednesday, September 16, 2015  
California Community Foundation



(L-R) Carl Ballton, AABLI board member; Larry Taylor, Ph.D., The Creighton Group; Anita DeFrantz, Esq., Western Asset Premier Bond Fund; Bonnie Hill, Ed.D., B. Hill Enterprises, LLC; Yvette Chappell-Ingram, AABLI president & CEO; Robert Davidson, Jr., Jacobs Engineering Group; and Eugene Boykins,

AABLI board member

[Click here to see the photo gallery](#)

With Dr. Taylor as moderator, the group of influential and seasoned for-profit board leaders provided attendees with time proven techniques on charting one's course to a compensated board seat.



### AABLI Celebrates the Holiday Season with Family and Friends



The [California African American Museum](#) (CAAM) was the perfect location for AABLI family and friends to enjoy the holiday spirit and to share another year of success.



### Alumni ThrowDown Results...

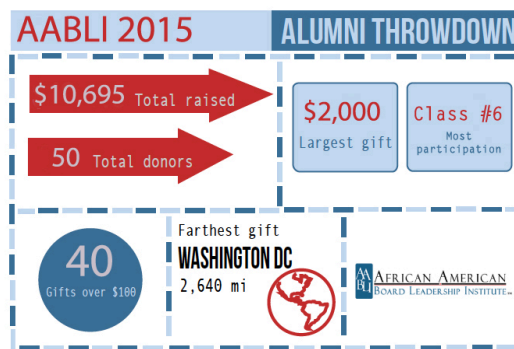
Class # 3 took the AABLI Trophy and threw down a challenge to take it again next year!



(L-R) Thyonne Gordon, Brent Burton, Sierra Smith, Faye Tillery, Eleanor Beasley

*Here's a look at the results:*





### Affiliated Placements



#### **Neville Rhone, Jr. - Class # 1**

Managing Partner, Arc Capital Partners, appointed to the [Marlborough School](#) board of trustees



#### **Capri Maddox - Class # 2**

Special Assistant City Attorney, Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney, joined the board of the [Southern California Public Radio](#)



#### **Michael Johnson - Class # 5**

Principal Executive, MDJ Associates, elected to the [Craft & Folk Art Museum](#) (CAFAM)



#### **David Crippens - AABLI Associate**

Nonprofit management & fundraising consultant, DLC & Associates, elected as chair of the [Los Angeles Trade Tech College Foundation](#)



#### **Yolanda Gorman, Ph.D. - AABLI Associate**

President & CEO, Phillips Graduate Institute, appointed to the [University of California Board of Regents, Ex Officio Regent](#)



#### **Gregory C. Scott - Class # 4**

President & CEO, New Directions for Veterans, Inc., elected to the [Holman Community Development Corporation](#) board of directors



**Jackie Majors - Class # 5**

CEO for Crystal Stairs, appointed to the commission for the [Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development](#)



**Leonardo Cablayan - Class # 6**

Principal, Consortium for Non-Profit Management, elected to the [Crenshaw Family YMCA](#)



**Monique Stennis - Class # 6**

Social Media Marketing Manager, University of Redlands, elected to the board of the [Academy of Science and Engineering](#)



**Gordon Peppers - Class # 6**

Local Sales Manager, KDOC-TV, elected to the [Foundation First](#) board of directors



**Schellee Y. Rocher - Class # 6**

Senior Director, Provider Operations, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), elected to the [Crenshaw Family YMCA](#) board of directors



**Collin L. Hinds - Class # 5**

Director of Development, University Relations, Loyola Marymount University, elected to the board of [Verbum Dei High School](#)

[View other AABLI-affiliated placements on our website.](#)



## Staff News

### Sierra Smith Joins the AABLI Staff!



Sierra Smith has joined the AABLI staff as Outreach and Engagement Manager.

Smith's responsibilities include planning and executing a comprehensive recruitment campaign to meet the organization's enrollment goals and help generate a pipeline of applicants. She also will help create activities and events to identify, connect and increase alumni involvement and development (prospect) generation.

An AABLI alum of Class #3, Smith comes to AABLI with several years of recruitment experience, having served as External Relations Manager for the Masters Program in Nonprofit Management at Antioch University, Los Angeles.

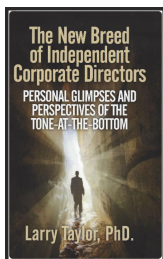
Smith received a bachelor's degree in Theater Arts from CSU Northridge and a master's degree in Organizational Management from Antioch University.

Please join us in welcoming Sierra Smith to our team!

Yvette Chappell-Ingram  
President and CEO



## President's Recommended Reading



Larry Taylor, PhD., is an experienced independent professional corporate director long involved with environmental and social initiatives. He has served on publicly traded corporate boards, private company boards, nonprofit boards and corporate advisory boards. Currently, he serves on the boards of Satori Food and Beverage, Inc., The Creighton Group and Profit+Impact (a B-Corporation). Dr. Taylor's nonprofit board memberships include Cranbrook Horizons Upward Bound for disadvantaged youth in Detroit and the National Association of Corporate Directors (SoCal).

We are happy to recommend his book, *The New Breed of Independent Corporate Directors*, to our readers.

For more on the author, please visit [Larry Taylor, PhD.](#)



## In Loving Memory



*Sherrie-Ann Gordon passed away on Tuesday, December 1, 2015.*

*At the age of 33, she had the wisdom of those twice her age. Sherrie volunteered for class # 1 and subsequently received her certificate in board governance in April 2013, class # 2. Shortly after receiving her certificate, she was appointed as a State Commissioner to the Dental Hygiene Committee by Governor Edmund Brown, Jr.*

*We will miss her spirit and philanthropic heart!*



## Engage with us on Social Media!





## Thank You to Our Supporters

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