



# GATE CITY BAR ASSOCIATION

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

October 2018

## GATE CITY BAR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Clyde E. Mize Jr., Esq.

### *Viva La Gate City!*

Cuba was not my first choice for this year's Gate City international trip. Initially, my plans were for us to travel to the Four Seasons Resort and Spa in Anguilla, West Indies to attend CLE classes, and to enjoy golf, the spa, and high-end accommodations. It was going to be a very luxurious, relaxing time. However, two factors required us to alter our plans: 1) Anguilla's protracted recovery from Hurricane Irma's September, 2017 wrath; and 2) the need for us to change the date of our trip. After much consideration, we settled on Cuba, and, wow, it was a great choice indeed.

On September 12, nearly sixty (60) Gate City members and friends boarded planes in Atlanta. Over the course of five (5) days, we experienced great food and drinks, danced, saw entertaining shows and toured places that were uniquely Cuban. Our tour guides were invaluable. They not only provided great insight into Cuban history and culture, they also knew the best places to buy cigars and where to enjoy a refreshing daiquiri on a hot Cuban day.

While I thoroughly enjoyed experiencing Cuba, more than anything, I enjoyed spending time with my fellow travelers. With extremely limited access to email and cell phones, we spent a lot of time engaging with one another. Certain moments our conversations were deep and philosophical, at others, they were lighthearted and full of laughter. Together, we tried new foods, sat up late nights around the pool, and figured out ways to navigate a Spanish-speaking community without our tour guides.

I learned so much. From Thomas G. Sampson Sr., P. Andrew Patterson, R. Gary Spencer and Jeff Thompkins, I heard stories about old Atlanta and legal giants such as Donald Hollowell, and from their wives I learned that you can be graceful, witty and look amazing even in hot weather. My hero Justice Robert Benham imparted wisdom on staying married for 50 years. Judge Gail Tusan showed me that judges can relax too and told me about the importance of representing the Atlanta Falcons, even in Cuba.

Our trip reinforced why I belong to the Gate City Bar Association, and it reminded me of why I'm so excited about our upcoming Hall of Fame Gala on November 10th. For me, Gate City is home. At home, you can be yourself, get inspired, and be rejuvenated. Our upcoming gala will provide yet another opportunity for me to spend time with my Gate City family, to celebrate our heroes and heroines in the law and to give scholarships to deserving students. For this I shout VIVA LA GATE CITY!!

Thanks Cuba. I will not soon forget you!

For tickets and sponsorships for the Hall of Fame Gala visit [www.gatecitybar.org](http://www.gatecitybar.org)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
GARDEN PARTY (6TH)	HALL OF FAME GALA (10TH) GRAND HYATT ATLANTA	HOLIDAY PARTY (13TH)
EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT (19TH-20TH)	EXCELLENCE SERIES (29TH)  ANNUAL MEETING AND GCBA ELECTIONS (29TH)	

*"Recommitting to our Mission, Engaging in our Community, Honoring Our Past"*

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## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES SPOTLIGHT



**O.V. Brantley, Esq.**  
*Retired, Chief Legal Officer  
Fulton and DeKalb Counties*

**Q. Other than being inducted into this year's Hall of Fame, what is your greatest professional accomplishment?** Being confirmed as County Attorney by the Board of Commissioners of both Fulton and DeKalb County. To me confirmation represents a belief on the part of the Commissioners not only that I am a good attorney, but that I will be fair in an environment that is constantly in conflict.

**Q. Favorite Vacation?** A craft tour to Bali where I learned to dye batik fabric and was kissed by an elephant!

**Q. In one word, describe your legal career -** Teacher

**Q. Something interesting about you most people don't know?** I love football.

**Q. Something on your bucket list you've checked off?** I climbed the Great Wall of China.

**Q. Something that's still on your bucket list?** Visit Kenya and have breakfast with giraffes.

**Q. Hobby?** Passionate quilter

**Q. What TV show most parallels your life or profession? Why?** I don't really watch TV — only sports and political news. I love the drama of sports. I love movies where one person saves the world — like in Independence Day.

**Q. Best advice given?** Live each day with joy and gratitude.

**Q. Best advice received?** "Stay on the high road" received from my mentor Marva Jones Brooks, former City of Atlanta Attorney.



**Michael V. Coleman, Esq.**  
*Partner  
Thompson Hine, LLP*

**Q. Other than being inducted into this year's Hall of Fame, what is your greatest professional accomplishment?**

I have had the opportunity to work on a number of exciting projects in my career, including the negotiation of Olympic agreements, the development of Phillips Arena, the development of Atlantic Station, the negotiation of an agreement that resulted in what is now John Lewis Freedom Parkway, numerous public and private financings, and a number of other matters. However, the good fortune to work daily over a sustained period of time with both the Honorable Maynard Jackson and the Honorable Horace Ward would have to count as career highlights for me. Both

were men of principle, with great intellect, commitment and integrity. I learned a lot from both. Also, working with Mayor Jackson to help negotiate agreements that shielded the City from financial liability from the 1996 Olympics was very significant, particularly when viewed in light of the great sums of money being spent on the games now by hosting cities.

**Q. Favorite Vacation:** A cruise with my family a few years ago. Also, I have always enjoyed a number of road trips to various Florida locations with my kids.

**Q. In one word, describe your legal career:** Diverse

**Q. Something interesting about you most people don't know?** My sister and I were among a handful of kids that integrated the public schools in my hometown of Florence, Alabama.

**Q. Something on your bucket list you've checked off?** A cruise

**Q. Something that's still on your bucket list?** Traveling to Africa with my family

**Q. Hobby?** Reading and basketball

**Q. What TV show most parallels your life or profession? Why?** I think there are parallels with "blackish" in the sense that the parents are trying to teach their relatively privileged children about some of the realities of life for young black people. Also, there is a some parallel in the effort to convey some historical aspects of black life in America.

**Q. Best advice given?** (i) Always do your very best, on even the smallest project.

(ii) Always strive to do the "right thing", in all circumstances **Received?** (i) stand by your principles (ii) Do what is "morally, ethically and legally" correct to achieve a goal. The converse of that is to not do anything that is morally, ethically, or legally improper.



**Ernest L. Greer, Esq.**  
*Co-President  
Greenberg Traurig LLP*

**Q. Other than being inducted into this year's Hall of Fame, what is your greatest professional accomplishment?**

I am very proud of becoming co-president of one of the largest law firms in the world and of having been the first lawyer to serve (in 2014) as Chairman of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce in that organization's 100-year history. I am also very proud that in addition to these and other leadership roles I have held in the firm and in the community, I have been able to keep an active legal practice, trying cases across the country and representing clients in multimillion-dollar actions in complex commercial litigation.

**Q. Favorite Vacation:** Anywhere where I can spend quality time with my family. Disconnecting by connecting with the people most important to you is critical in today's very connected world.

**Q. In one word, describe your legal career:** Blessed.

**Q. Something interesting about you most people don't know?** My family is from St. Louis, Missouri. Growing up, I was the only African American in my class at St. Louis Country Day School, a private school I attended on financial aid. By the time I graduated in 1984, there was only one additional black student in my class.

**Q. Something on your bucket list you've checked off?** Every day that you do a good job, that you invest in yourself, that you approach success as inevitable is something to celebrate and "check off". Don't wait for the "big ticket items" — make everything you do worthy of celebration.

**Q. Something that's still on your bucket list?** I am continuously looking to create new and better opportunities for diverse people within the legal profession. Law firms are not doing enough and, as a result, the profession is nowhere close to where we should be with regard to a truly diverse workplace.

**Q. Hobby?** I truly enjoy travel. I understand why many folks who travel with regard to their work may not see it that way. However, I see travel as a conduit to people and they are at the core of what I do. Travel allows you to experience life rather than just know facts and figures about a place or a group of people — in particular clients.

**Q. What TV show most parallels your life or profession? Why?** House. I am a problem solver and an advocate for people. It is what I was born to do.

**Q. Best advice given? Received?** I'm a guy whose parents invested everything they could to allow me to receive a quality education. Since the beginning of my career, I've gone out and found my own opportunities and now I get to pass that forward. That is the best advice I can give any young person: Invest in yourself and find your own opportunities. The best advice I have been given dates back to law school and it is something I continue pass forward even today: Be more than simply a great lawyer. Be a great person, listen to clients, and have a passion for their goals.

## LEGACY

By: *Shawntel R. Hebert, Esq., Foundation Chair*

As the Gate City Bar Association continues our 70th Anniversary Celebration this year, it is natural to reflect on where and why we started as an organization. In 1948, our ten forward-thinking founders knew that a minority bar association was needed to provide African American attorneys with a sense of community, comradery, and support. For perspective, Atlanta did not become a beacon in the civil rights movement until the 1960s. Further, Atlanta did not elect its first African American Mayor, Maynard H. Jackson, Jr., until 1973. Yet, out of the Gate City Bar Association rose revered judges including **Justice Robert Benham** (first African American to serve on the Supreme Court of Georgia), the late **Honorable Horace T. Ward** (first African American appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia), and **Judge Thelma Wyatt Cummings Moore** (first African American woman to serve on the state courts of Georgia) and legal giants including **A.T. Walden** (civil rights litigator) and **Marva Jones Brooks** (first female and African American Atlanta City Attorney). Some of you reading may think this is an impressive list, but wonder what about in recent times.

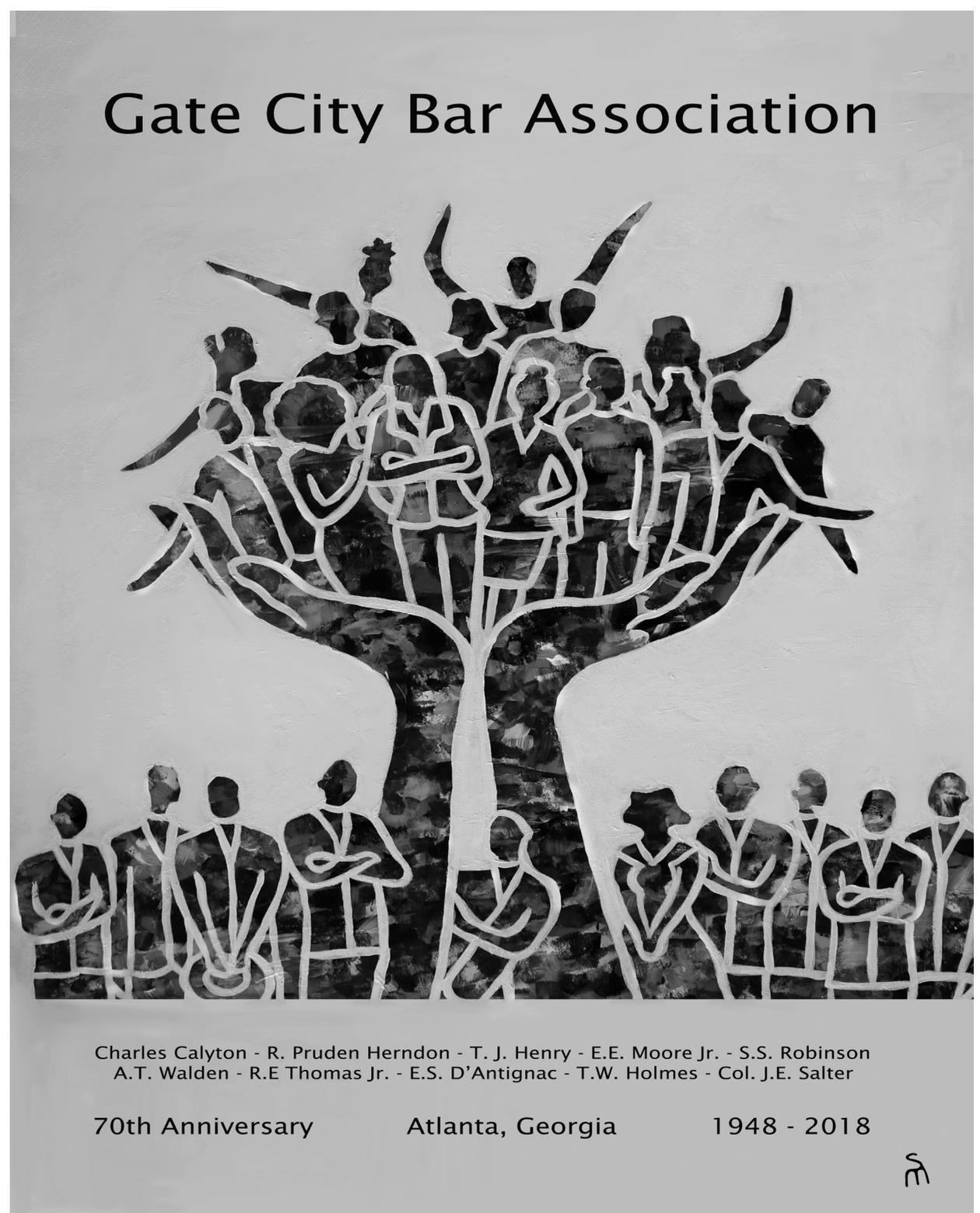
Seventy years later, in 2018, the Gate City Bar Association proudly boasts Past Presidents **Patrise Perkins-Hooker** (the first African American President of the State Bar of Georgia in 2015) and **L. Chris Stewart** (nationally acclaimed civil rights attorney) and Hall of Fame Inductees **Forrest B. Johnson** (highly successful personal injury attorney) and **Teresa Wynn Roseborough** (Executive Vice President – General Counsel and Corporate Secretary of The Home Depot). These are but a few names of the dynamic, inspiring, and high-achieving jurists that contribute to the rich legacy of the Gate City Bar Association. And although opportunities to be the “first” may be dwindling, opportunities to be impactful, honorable, and successful within our legal community are endless.

In the city of Atlanta, we are fortunate to have hundreds – if not thousands – of African American practicing attorneys and judges. This level of diversity is to be celebrated. However, we should not allow this concentration of minority practitioners lull us into a state of complacency. Each year, the Gate City Bar hosts programs focusing on the community (Community Law Clinic), the professional development of high school students (Justice Benham Law Camp) and law students (Summer Associate Program & Black Law Students Retreat), and practicing attorneys (Excellence through Education and networking functions). In 2018, President Mize started our Young Lawyers Division and the A.T. Walden Civil Rights Project. Yet, there is much work to be done.

We still have far too many skilled African American attorneys who are unable to secure viable employment options. We still have residents in our communities that need competent pro bono legal services to shield them from civil rights violations and other societal wrongs. We still have qualified judicial and political candidates that need our support. And we still have a need for the same sense of community, comradery, and support that was established for African American attorneys in 1948. The Gate City Bar Association remains as relevant now as it was seventy years ago.

On behalf of Gate City, I would like to thank each and every person – law student, paralegal, attorney, judge, or friend – minority or majority – who has contributed to this invaluable organization. As we count down to the 2018 Hall of Fame Gala on November 10th, I look forward to getting all dressed up, greeting familiar faces, celebrating our 2018 inductees, and awarding law student scholarships. Even more, I look forward to reflecting on the rich LEGACY of the Gate City Bar Association and imagining what the next 70 years will look like. Join us in continuing the LEGACY!

**Purchase Our Commemorative Poster at [www.gatecitybar.org](http://www.gatecitybar.org)**



Charles Calyton - R. Pruden Herndon - T. J. Henry - E.E. Moore Jr. - S.S. Robinson  
A.T. Walden - R.E Thomas Jr. - E.S. D'Antignac - T.W. Holmes - Col. J.E. Salter

70th Anniversary

Atlanta, Georgia

1948 - 2018

# PHOTO GALLERY

*On September 12th, 57 members and friends of the Gate City Bar Association visited Havana, Cuba for our annual trip. Our visit was filled with beautiful views, rich history, authentic Cuban food, and incredible music. We truly enjoyed the fellowship outside of courtroom and law firm walls and invite you to join us next year!*

