



LEAD YOUR CITY

Agenda • Speakers Bios • Sponsors

synerG's annual Lead Your City summit is designed to advance careers and expand young professional networks in Greensboro.

Learn more!
synerg.org/lyc





Agenda



Speakers



Sponsors



Agenda At-A-Glance

8:30am - 9:15am	Check-In and Breakfast			Main Lobby
9:15am - 9:30am	Welcome			Auditorium
9:30am - 9:40am	Break: Transition to Breakout Sessions			—
9:40am - 10:40am	Breakout Sessions Block 1 - Choose One Session			Various Locations
	Level Up Your Leadership	Being Adaptive & Authentic	Speaking with Confidence	
10:40am - 11:00am	Break: Transition to Keynote Address + Headshots + Snack Break			—
11:00am - 12:00pm	Keynote Address			Auditorium
12:00pm - 1:50pm	Lunch Break			Pre Function Room + Oak Ridge C/D
1:50pm - 2:00pm	Break: Transition to Breakout Sessions			—
2:00pm - 3:00pm	Breakout Sessions Block 2 - Choose One Session			Various Locations
	Feedback That Works	How to Speak Up at Work	Developing a Growth Mindset	
3:00pm - 3:10pm	Transition to Panel Discussion			—
3:10pm - 4:10pm	Panel Discussion Leading the Way: Civic Engagement for YPs			Auditorium
4:10pm - 5:30pm	Networking Reception			Main Lobby
*4:30pm	Honda Aircraft Company Tour			Honda Aircraft Company



Agenda



Speakers



Sponsors



Detailed Agenda

8:30am - 9:15am

CHECK-IN AND BREAKFAST

Location: Main Lobby

Arrive at the Conference Center at GTCC and check in at the welcome table in the main lobby. Use this time to enjoy breakfast, have your headshot taken, and visit the swag table.

9:15am - 9:30am

WELCOME

Location: Auditorium

Remarks from synerG: Kinsley Fraser, synerG Council Co-Chair

Remarks and Sponsor Spotlight: Guilford Technical Community College - Dr. Tony Clarke, President, GTCC

Mindful Movement: Ariel Rubin, REL Healing Arts

9:30am - 9:40am

TRANSITION TO BREAKOUT SESSIONS





9:40am - 10:40am

BREAKOUT SESSIONS BLOCK 1 - CHOOSE ONE SESSION

1

Level Up Your Leadership: Goal Setting, Delegation, and Accountability Tools for First Time Managers

Abby Donnelly, The Leadership & Legacy Group

Location: Oak Ridge A/B

This session is for emerging leaders who are ready to step up, stand out, and lead with confidence in today's fast-paced world.

- **Crush Your Goals:** Master the art of setting goals that fuel motivation and drive results.
- **Smart Delegation Hacks:** Learn how to set clear, no-nonsense expectations that keep your team aligned, motivated, and ready to crush their targets, freeing up your time to focus on next level responsibilities.
- **Accountability Boosters:** Discover how to create a culture where everyone owns their work, leading to stronger performance and team pride.

2

Being Adaptive & Authentic: Having Conversations That Cultivate Connection

Celina McCrea, Triad Goodwill

Location: Classroom 130/131

In today's rapidly evolving workplace, effective communication is more critical than ever, with listening skills, professionalism, and relationship building consistently ranking as top priorities for employers—so how can you leverage these skills to stay competitive in the job market?

Join us for the workshop “Being Adaptive & Authentic: Having Conversations that Cultivate Connection,” where we will explore how to balance professionalism with authenticity in the workplace. In this workshop, you will learn techniques for engaging in meaningful conversations that build strong, lasting relationships, positioning you for long-term success in your career.



3

Speaking with Confidence

Megan Summers, GTCC

Location: Business Resource Room

In this session, you'll learn how to make the right first impression during a job interview or while giving your elevator pitch by mastering verbal and nonverbal communication. This session will guide you through crafting a compelling elevator pitch that highlights not just your experience, but also your unique value and potential. Whether you're job searching or just want to talk about yourself confidently, this session is essential for YPs who want to stand out.

Join GTCC Communications Instructor Megan Summers for a taste of the wide array of continuing education opportunities the college offers!





10:40am - 11:00am

TRANSITION TO KEYNOTE ADDRESS + HEADSHOTS + SNACK BREAK

Location: Main Lobby

11:00am - 12:00pm

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Location: Auditorium

Wilson Lester, Partners in Equity

Interviewed by Cecelia Thompson, Action Greensboro

In this keynote address, Wilson Lester will discuss how he found personal and professional purpose. Wilson's career has not been linear. From entrepreneurship to local leadership he has found the balance of mission and margin, producing both profit and life changing impact for business owners least connected to capital.

Following his presentation, Wilson will be joined by Cecelia Thompson, Executive Director of Action Greensboro, for a Q&A conversation.

Time permitting, Wilson will answer questions from the audience.





12:00pm - 1:50pm

LUNCH BREAK

Location: Pre Function Room + Oak Ridge C/D

Enjoy a buffet lunch. Use this longer break to have your headshot taken, connect with fellow attendees, or check in with work and answer emails.

1:50pm - 2:00pm

TRANSITION TO BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:00pm - 3:00pm

BREAKOUT SESSIONS BLOCK 2 - CHOOSE ONE SESSION

1

Feedback That Works

Marin Burton, Center for Creative Leadership

Location: Oak Ridge A/B

This session will explore the essential skill of giving feedback. During the session, participants will learn about effective feedback practices and will practice constructing feedback using Center for Creative Leadership's Situation-Behavior-Feedback (SBI) framework. The feedback skills discussed in this session can be applied in multiple facets of young professional life – in the workplace, on various teams, within the community and at home.



2

How to Speak Up at Work

Ayesha Swinton, PhD

Location: Classroom 130/131

Have you ever been a part of a conversation that you wish had gone differently? Perhaps you were caught off guard and left stunned by a particular comment. Minutes, hours or even days after the interaction, you finally think of the exact right thing to say? As we seek to foster environments where everyone feels a sense of belonging and worth, we realize that navigating the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion can be really hard! Oftentimes, we are trying desperately to be allies, accomplices, and co-conspirators, but we fall down on the job when we don't know how to react to expressed biases and microaggressions. This presentation endeavors to prepare folks to respond when they come in contact bias so they might be less likely to agonize over missed opportunities. As a collective we will explore and offer suggestions for finding balance and maintaining relationships in nuanced situations when we encounter bias.



3

Developing a Growth Mindset

Brian Finch, Triad Goodwill

Location: Business Resource Center

In today's rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt, learn, and grow is more important than ever. This presentation will explore the concept of a growth mindset; a powerful belief system that emphasizes the potential for development and improvement through effort and perseverance.

We will delve into the differences between a fixed mindset and a growth mindset, discuss the benefits of adopting a growth-oriented perspective, and provide practical strategies to cultivate and maintain this mindset in both personal and professional contexts.

Join to unlock the secrets to continuous growth and success!

3:00pm - 3:10pm

TRANSITION TO PANEL DISCUSSION





3:10pm - 4:10pm

PANEL DISCUSSION - LEADING THE WAY: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR YPS

Panelists:

- Adam Marshall, Law Firm Carolinas
- Amanda Cook, High Point City Council and The Teacher's Edge
- Jose Sandoval, First Citizens Bank

Moderator:

- Jarrod Rudd, UNCG Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement

Location: Auditorium

In this panel discussion, you will hear from young professional leaders who will discuss the vital role YPs play in shaping the future through civic engagement. Panelists will share their insight and experiences with leveraging skills, networks, and passions to drive positive change in our community and beyond. Whether you're just starting out or already active in civic life, this discussion will empower you to lead the way in creating a more engaged society.

4:10pm - 5:30pm

NETWORKING RECEPTION

Location: Main Lobby

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine, and NA beverages. Use this networking hour to connect with fellow attendees as we close out the summit.

*4:30pm

HONDA AIRCRAFT COMPANY TOUR

Location: Honda Aircraft Company

Pre-registered tour attendees should make their way to Honda Aircraft Company immediately following the panel discussion.





Agenda



Speakers



Sponsors



Speakers

Keynote Speaker



WILSON LESTER

Wilson Lester is Co-Founder and Managing Partner of Partners in Equity (PIE). PIE is a private equity investment company focusing on business purpose real estate. Noting that transferable assets are the most sustainable pathway to generational wealth, PIE’s strategy focuses on underinvested communities with a higher index of tenancy versus ownership, offering an opportunity for more businesses to own where they operate. Wilson’s leadership extends beyond traditional investment strategies. He is the visionary behind Piedmont Business Capital, a pioneering North Carolina-based Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), which has strategically deployed millions in impact capital to uplift Black-owned businesses across the state.

As the Co-Founder of the ACCESS Center for Equity and Success, he plays a crucial regional role in empowering minority business enterprises to access public and private contract opportunities, thereby advancing economic inclusion. His commitment to transformative philanthropy is evident through his roles as Treasurer and Investment Committee member at the Cone Health Foundation and his board





positions at the Triad Advisory Council for Truist Bank and Greensboro College. His involvement with various boards dedicated to health and economic development, including past contributions to the African American Alliance of CDFI CEOs Advocacy Committee, underscores his dedication to shaping policies that benefit Black businesses and foster resilient communities, highlighting his unwavering commitment to economic inclusion.

Believing that generational wealth starts with educating family, Wilson created Nocho Park Redevelopment, an infill residential development company, to introduce his family to a living-learning lab that provides affordable housing in the community while building long-term assets.

Wilson earned his undergraduate degree in Business Administration from Greensboro College and his Master of Science in Management, Strategy, and Leadership from the Eli Broad School of Business at Michigan State University.

Wilson was most recently selected as an inaugural Wealth Innovation Fellow with the Aspen Institute Financial Security Program.





ABBY DONNELLY

Abby Donnelly, CEO Coach and President of The Leadership & Legacy Group, is a renowned executive coach for the business, leadership, strategy and interpersonal side of succession planning and exit. Her clients are business owners and successors in small to mid-market and multi-generational family businesses who are concerned about how to ensure their successor is prepared to lead, and how to prepare themselves for an exciting next chapter. They may be facing complex decisions and challenging conversations they've never had to deal with before, and they really want to handle them well.



ADAM MARSHALL

Adam Marshall is a Partner at Law Firm Carolinas and focuses his practice on representation of community associations in North Carolina. Specifically, providing guidance to the firm's community association clients regarding matters of governing document interpretation, association governance, and collections. Adam leads the firm's land use, zoning and planning section and practices in the area of corporate law, debt collection, and residential real estate.

Adam is active in the local community and has served on various boards and commissions for the City of Greensboro, including service as a member of the Human Relations Commission, Greensboro Criminal Justice Advisory Commission (Chairperson 2023 term), Board of Adjustment, and Zoning Commission. Adam served as the Chairperson of the Greensboro Zoning Commission for the 2019-2020 term. Adam is a current Member of the Greensboro Alcohol Beverage Control Board. Additionally, Adam is a graduate of Greensboro's City Academy and Leadership Greensboro.



AMANDA COOK

Amanda is veteran public school teacher and community advocate. She is a 2008 graduate of UNCG with a BA in Dance Education and minor in Communication Studies. She holds a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction and Teacher Leadership from Gardner Webb University.

In 2020 she founded a local nonprofit, The Teacher's Edge 501c3 which works to elevate the teaching profession through rich professional development and authentic community engagement. In 2023, Amanda was elected to High Point City Council, At Large. She lives with her partner, Paresh, her son, Thatcher, and their beloved dog, Noodle. In her "free" time Amanda volunteers as the State Officer Advisor for South Carolina Future Business Leaders of America, and presents at national conferences related to creativity and innovation. She is an avid creative journaler and loves to travel to National Parks all around America. Amanda leads with communication and education to impact the life of individuals and society.



ARIEL RUBIN

Ariel Rubin is a Health and Fitness Coach in the NC Triad Area and owner of REL Healing Arts LLC.

She offers 1:1 private and group fitness and health coaching, somatic therapy, and wellness workshop seminars.

Ariel is passionate about preventative lifestyle medicine, the livelihood of communities and supporting local economies. She currently is in pursuit of a Physician Assistance Masters!



BRIAN FINCH, ED.D.

Brian Finch joined the Triad Goodwill team in 2022. In his role as the Training Specialist, he leverages his expertise in adult learning and curriculum development to design and deliver training opportunities for the Triad community. Brian holds a doctorate degree in education with a focus in Adult Learning and has 26 years of experience in secondary and higher education settings.

An inspiring advocate for learning and development, Brian endeavors to build more inclusive opportunities for professional growth. By teaching the power of collaboration and mutual respect, he believes in creating an environment to help all employees reach their professional and personal potential.



CELINA MCCREA

Celina is a seasoned community engagement professional with a strong track record in building strategic partnerships that connect job seekers to meaningful careers. With extensive experience as a case manager and a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations from SUNY Fredonia, Celina leverages her communication skills to drive impactful change in workforce development. In 2023, she was awarded the Rookie of the Year at Goodwill Industries of Central North Carolina, where she currently works as the Community & Business Engagement Manager. Celina is also a proud graduate of the Leadership High Point Class of 2024. Outside of work, she volunteers with foster families, supporting the children in their care.



CECELIA THOMPSON

Cecelia Thompson serves as Executive Director of Action Greensboro. Action Greensboro, together with the Chamber of Commerce, serves as the city’s primary economic and community development agency. Formed in 2001, Action Greensboro is a collaborative effort of eight local charitable foundations working to leverage local philanthropic impact. In collaboration with business, higher education, and municipal government, Action Greensboro works to strengthen Greensboro’s economy and ensure the continuation of its excellent quality of life. In her role, Thompson leads a variety of efforts from talent and workforce development, K-20 education, urban livability, advocacy campaigns and city marketing efforts. In addition to her role at Action Greensboro, Thompson serves on the boards of the Guilford Education Alliance, the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation, the Greensboro ABC Commission, and is a gubernatorial appointee to the North Carolina Humanities Council. Originally from Gainesville, Florida, Thompson holds a B.A. in Political Science, Public Administration and Sociology from Elon University.



AYESHA SWINTON, PHD

Ayesha cannot seem to squelch her passion for learning. She earned a BA in Romance Languages at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At the University of North Carolina at Greensboro she earned both her Master’s Degree in Education with a concentration in Spanish Teacher Leadership and most recently her PhD in Educational Studies with a focus on Teacher Education. Her dissertation centered around world languages and technology, aligning with one of her teaching focuses of using tech tools to help her students engage in language learning. She has been teaching for 20 years and has been in DEI work for 5 years and has recently worked at Guilford College as the Interim Director of Transformation. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.





JARROD RUDD, M.ED.

Jarrod Rudd, M.Ed. (he/him) currently serves as the Director for the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement at The University of North Carolina Greensboro. He earned his B.A. in African American Studies from UNC Greensboro, his M.Ed. in Higher Education from UNC Wilmington, and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Educational Studies (Higher Education) at UNC Greensboro, where his research interests include Black men in higher education, leadership development, and the inclusion of diverse voices in leadership education. Jarrod is a CliftonStrengths Certified Coach and Certified Practitioner of the Leadership Challenge. He uses these tools to help students, faculty, and staff achieve their goals through coaching, leveraging their strengths, and exploring their values. Jarrod enjoys reading, coffee, watching movies, playing soccer and volleyball, and finding new adventures!



JOSÉ SANDOVAL

With a seventeen-year career in banking, José A. Sandoval is currently a VP and Business Development Officer with First Citizens Bank where he works with individuals and business owners to achieve financial success. In addition, he is also an experienced entrepreneur and leader in real estate and financial planning. Recipient of the 2020 40 Leaders Under 40 and the Leadership Greensboro Service Medal.

José is a strong believer in giving back to the community that has given him so much. He currently serves as the treasurer and board member of the United Way of Greater Greensboro, a member of the DEI Council for the North Carolina Bankers Association, and a board member of the Cone Health Foundation and the North Carolina Folk Festival. He has also served on the board of The Latino Community Coalition of Guilford County, Participatory Budgeting Project and one of the founders of Let's Learn Triad, an organization fighting for tuition equity for all North Carolina students. Lastly, he proudly served on synerG council for four years and Co-Chaired the council in 2018-2019.



DR. MARIN BURTON

Dr. Marin Burton is a Senior Faculty member in the Societal Impact division at the Center for Creative Leadership. Marin excels in crafting and delivering innovative leadership development programs with a strong emphasis on engaged pedagogies. She leverages her extensive experience in community, business, and academia to create dynamic, learner-centered experiences. Marin also leads initiatives that integrate leadership development into organizations to deeply impact organizational culture. Her style is energetic, intentional and highly interactive. Her work spans a diverse array of portfolios, including nonprofit and public health sectors, where she develops leaders to drive meaningful societal change.



MEGAN SUMMERS

Megan Summers is an Instructor of Communication at Guilford Technical Community College. With over 15 years of experience, she focuses her curricula around teaching students practical and effective tools to improve their relationships through communication, leading to student connection and retention. Her classes include Introduction to Interpersonal Communication and Public Speaking. She conducts student workshops focusing on self-presentation skills which prepare students for real-world job interviews and other crucial life events. Megan is a member of the GTCC Communication and Foreign Language Department Speaker Series committee, through which she arranges for a series of visiting guest speakers to impart their valuable insights, lessons and wisdom learned through real-world experiences onto the GTCC student body. She received her Master of Communication Studies from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and graduated from the Western Carolina University Honors College. Outside of the classroom, Megan loves spending time with her family, including her husband, son and twin toddler daughters.



Agenda



Speakers



Sponsors

synerG presents



LEAD YOUR CITY

Many Thanks to our Sponsors!

— Host Sponsor —



— Gold Sponsor —



— Silver Sponsors —



— Bronze Sponsors —

