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Triple Eagle Named to Georgia Southern 40 Under 40 List

September 21, 2022



2016 MBA Graduates

by Benjamin Tankersley

The Georgia Southern 40 Under 40 Class of 2022 was honored in a ceremony during Homecoming. Among the members of the class, just one is a Triple Eagle: LaShai Campbell (ACCT, 2012; MAcc, 2015; MBA, 2016). After earning three degrees from Georgia Southern, LaShai also came back to work on campus as the business manager for the Division of Student Affairs. She and her husband, Philip, also founded Restoring the Breach, Inc. in 2017.

After being nominated for the 40 Under 40 list, LaShai did not find out she had been named to the Class of 2022 until a friend told her. “I didn’t even know,” she said. “Somebody else called me, and I was like really? It was very surprising and very humbling. I’m so thankful, and I hope to use the platform to continue to spread awareness about the needs in the Bulloch County community.”

According to its website, Restoring the Breach is “committed to bestowing unconditional love through righteous acts by providing members of our community with tools to help them build the life they want for themselves and their families. We specifically offer spiritual, physical, emotional, social, and financial services through direct programming for all residents, youth, adults, and college students alike, regardless of their socioeconomic status or religious affiliation.” According to LaShai, the non-profit offers several different direct programs. Through these programs, Restoring the Breach has been able to support more than 3,000 college students, youths, and residents in the Statesboro-Bulloch County area.

One of the major programs Restoring the Breach offers is called “ME First” tutoring, which focuses on math and English language arts for K–12 students. To explain the focus, LaShai said, “Knowing ... if you can get math and English down, then, of course, you can get social studies and science because those are the foundations.” These programs are held at the Statesboro-Bulloch County library on Tuesday and Thursday nights. Restoring the Breach also holds a community health fair, a community baby shower, and giveaways at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

LaShai’s life has taken her far from where she originally thought she would be. After coming to Georgia Southern to major in chemistry and become a dentist, she found a new love: accounting. “You will not find better professors than in the School of Accountancy,” LaShai commented. She specifically mentioned Lowell Mooney, Ph.D., and Dwight Sneathen, Ph.D., as faculty who impacted her life during her time at Georgia Southern.

While pursuing her MACC, LaShai was also preparing to complete the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam. “Starting out, I was going to do what everybody else was doing and work for a public CPA firm,” LaShai confided. “I was going to work 60 to 80 hours a week and live the dream. Most of my classmates were doing that because that is what the goal was.”

But, after failing two parts of the CPA exam, LaShai became discouraged and began to rethink her career. Each part of the CPA exam costs \$250, so retaking parts of the exam can quickly become unaffordable. This caused her to reflect on her career and think about what she was passionate about. She concluded that she was passionate about service. “In the Accounting Association, I was the community service chair before serving as vice president,” LaShai recalls. “I was in leadership for Beta Alpha Psi, incorporating community service into that.”

Ultimately, her experiences, allowed LaShai to open up her career options and realize that she was not quite done with school yet. “In the midst of getting my MACC, I realized that, while I did enjoy accounting, I wondered if that is the only thing I want to do. It’s so technical that, if you are in any business, you are going to stay in the accounting department if you only have accounting degrees, so I decided to also get my MBA,” she explained.

LaShai is very complimentary about the cohort with whom she completed her MBA program, noting, “We studied together and laughed together. A few of us went on the study abroad trip to Spain and had a wonderful time.” In the cohort, the students came up with several different nicknames for each other to the point that LaShai does not remember some of her classmates’ real names.

Recently, the cohort recently came back together to collectively mourn the passing of one of their classmates, Jasmine Haley. “We found out on social media that Jasmine passed, and it was unexpected, being in her younger 30s,” LaShai stated. “It was just very hard, just knowing the connections we have.”

One member of the cohort, Christine Koppel, organized a tree planting in Jasmine’s honor, and the group planted about 100 trees in her remembrance. LaShai is one of 15 representatives from the Parker College of Business named to the 40 Under 40 Class of 2022. Joining her are Mark Bragg (MKTG, 2013), Dane Browner (Mktg, 2011), Trent Doty (LOGT, 2013), Jennifer Engle (ACCT, 2007), Steven Haught (MBA, 2016), Jessica Hood (REG ECON DEV, 2007; MBA, 2015), Justin Janney (ACCT, 2008; MBA, 2012), Jessica Johnson (ACCT, 2008), Daniel McGann (ECON, 2013), Tariq Muhammad (MKTG, 2006), Tereance Puryear (LOGT, 2006), Tavia Thurmond Ward (MGMT, 2015), and Heath Vickers (ACCT, 2006).

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