

CSEM's new partnership could be explosive in a good way

“We've got something that could just blow the doors off the whole system.”

That's what Antwain Tate Goode, Ph.D., president of Tate Consulting, says of the free entrepreneurial training program his company is offering through CSEM. The 8-week program for business vets, WSSU students and others is aimed at growing minority business in East Winston.

“This should be in every HBCU,” Goode said.

The program is rooted in one that he and his wife, Andrea Goode, vice president of Tate Consulting, developed for businesses and municipalities a few years ago. CSEM Associate Director Alvin Atkinson brought the program to CSEM after talking to the Goodes. The “East Winston version” of their program has quickly developed a loyal following among its seven initial class members. The “Playbook for Entrepreneurial Excellence” classes started at the Enterprise Center on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Winston-Salem, then moved to a virtual setting as the shelter-in-place rules of the pandemic began. The initial students and the Goodes celebrated with a virtual graduation on May 9, 2020.

The Goode's lively class carries a variety of lessons, including how to write a business letter, create a logo and mission and vision statement, and website. Potential employers and business partners “won't bet on you when they don't know who you are,” Andrea Goode said.

She added: “We help people to see their dreams and follow through on them.”

Their classes emphasize tenacity. “You can't give up, that's a big one,” Dr. Goode said.

Students need that, and so do business vets who, for various reasons, have been stymied in their careers. Antwain Goode said: “They're skipping steps when they start their own companies. We're making sure they have the executive-level competency.”

Most important, graduates will attain certification as operators of Historically Underutilized Business. This certification is designed to promote economic opportunities for historically underutilized businesses in state government contracting and procurement, the Goodes explained, and without it, small businesses cannot compete for state projects.

The Goodes recently gave the CSEM staff a presentation about their program. CSEM Founding Director Craig Richardson embraced the work, and encouraged the Goodes to find ways to scale-up small businesses in East Winston, noting that's been a long-standing challenge.



WSSU student and community entrepreneurs Dustin Sellers, Roberto Vandergrift and Dexter Perkins work on their business mission and vision statements.



Dr. Antwain Tate Goode and Andrea La Mone Goode

The Goodes, with one child in high school and the other in college, know a bit about tenacity needed to meet such challenges. Andrea Goode had a stroke five years ago. As she recovered, she and her husband, who'd both held high-level jobs in other companies, decided to start Tate Consulting and give something back to Winston-Salem. “We saw a gap,” Andrea Goode said.

Their classes emphasize tenacity. “You can't give up, that's a big one,” Dr. Goode said. “We're going to provide insight to the learners so they won't give up.”

Their mission fits with CSEM's “Our Place, Our Space” strategy of addressing generational poverty in the neighborhoods around the WSSU campus in East Winston by encouraging business development. The Goodes' program will complement CSEM's Community Acceleration Research Program, which awards grants of up to \$12,500 to community residents, organizations and individuals, including WSSU students, who are striving for economic mobility through workforce development, health and well-being, and growth of businesses for social good.

The Tate program is laser-focused on East Winston. “Applicant must currently live in, or plan to establish a business in East Winston-Salem,” according to the application requirements. “... Applicant must submit a 500-word essay on the following: As an executive entrepreneur, what will be the legacy impact that you will bring to your community?”

That's a fine question for program participants. As Atkinson says: “There has to be a better pathway, and this may open some doors.”

Richardson said: “That's why we're here. This is our community.”

For more information about *The Playbook for Entrepreneurial Excellence* program, go to <https://entrepreneurialexcellence.org/>

“As director of Atkins Community Development Corporation, I'm excited about having access to CSEM research that is focused on Forsyth County's most vulnerable citizens. I appreciate the presentations by WSSU faculty and students and want their findings to lead to advocacy and new policies that result in systemic change.”



Carol Davis