

New initiative bridging East Winston to power structures

By Antwain and Andrea Goode, founders of The NE³W Leadership Academy

It's six miles from East Winston to the sprawling Graylyn International Conference Center on Reynolda Road in Winston-Salem. At first blush to some, the distance might seem much more, that from blight to bright. But CSEM research confirms what many East Winston residents have long known: There is just as much talent among the modest homes of East Winston as there is among the large homes of Reynolda Road leading to Graylyn.

It's a matter of making the invisible visible, of enhancing and amplifying the community voices that can and will break down economic barriers, one person at a time, ripples becoming waves. The key is a groundbreaking new program that could set a national model.

Our program, The NE³W Leadership Academy, held its inaugural program at Graylyn in September 2020. The program is where hope lives and grows, setting a needed model for our communities from which we can network and rise, together.

The Academy was born in research commissioned in 2017 by CSEM. One figure jumped out at CSEM: the amount of hope still held by East Winston residents, despite years of barriers to economic mobility. The survey targeted almost 15,000 households in East Winston. Five hundred participants were selected by quota sampling. Those participants agreed, for the most part, that hard work leads to success, and that they can achieve whatever level of education they would like.

In the summer of 2020, CSEM shared that data with our company, Tate Consulting, as well as related findings on hope from a Gallup survey that complemented the findings of the local survey (see box on page 11). The CSEM data inspired us to quickly start mapping the new program. Our company, based at the Enterprise Center on Martin Luther King Drive in East Winston, inaugurated and runs the inspiring program. CSEM sponsors it.

The Academy's unique emphasis is on empowering individuals, one at a time, to become powerful leaders for change within their communities and build strong community networks for change. The new program is based on education, economics and emotion, blending state-of-the-art training on virtual Zoom meetings with bedrock strategies such as hand-written thank-you notes. And, most important of all, journaling, for program participants to tap into inspiring stories from their ancestors and current mentors and map their own plans, and to leave a legacy for mentees and future generations.

We are creating legacy heroes, and that begins with what we write down in journals. Our written words are crucial. We are losing many recipes, ideas and family know-how. The Academy will provide the

fusion between technology and the lived experience. In short, we are not going to allow our ideas to be buried when our loved ones transition. We have something new that will create a new perspective for written family success. We are unlocking a new mindset of journaling firepower.

We also help our participants develop their intuition and focus. If you develop your intuition, you will see things before they happen. If you focus like a magnifying glass and get help with your strategy, others will see your vision. They will know that it is not about you. This is the formula that creates the moments needed to withstand any crisis. We will help our community residents win the moments and create years of legacy leaders.

The inspiring strength of legacies is universal. Conventional power structures have long used it. Low-wealth communities have passed down their stories as well, but have not had the same sway. The NE³W Academy will change that, organizing its participants, giving them the tools they need to fully realize their considerable talents to connect and work with those in power in nonprofit, government and business, breaking down barriers so that we can all rise together.

This is our shared future. This is where hope lives.



NE³W Academy leader Antwain Goode demonstrates the use of a tripod camera for ZOOM calls to program participant Kimberlee McNeil.