

Pattillo Alumnus Appointed by President Obama

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Recently, Janice Bryant Howroyd was appointed to an Administrative post as a Member of the Board of Advisors to the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) by President Barack Obama. The Board will serve in an advisory capacity to the President and the Secretary of Education on programs, strategies and methods to strengthen HBCUs, and increase the private sector presence in strengthening them, with concentration on ways to ensure long-term viability and institutional enhancement.

Janice Bryant (affectionately called Jan) is a Tarboro native born to John and Elretha Bryant in a family of 11 children. I remember Jan as a well-spoken person, an enthusiastic and versatile high school student who was one of the top academic performers in her class. She also participated in extracurricular activities and she attended St. Paul Baptist Church. Jan graduated in the last class from W. A. Pattillo High School in 1970. She matriculated at North Carolina A&T State University (NC A&T SU) in Greensboro, NC on scholarship where she earned a bachelor's degree in English.

In 1976, Janice travelled to Los Angeles on vacation to visit her sister (Sandra). Her brother-in-law employed her as an assistant at *Billboard* Magazine. She discovered she had a love for organization and employee placement, so she decided to stay and start her own employment agency. With a combined total of about \$1500 from her savings and a loan from a family member, in 1978 she started ACT*1. It was just her and a telephone in a small rented space located in Beverly Hills, CA. She marketed her business with cold calls and word of mouth. *Billboard* was one of her first clients.

Today, 35+ years later, the ACT*1 Group is a billion-dollar global enterprise providing workforce management, employment services and procurement solutions to a wide array of government agencies, Fortune 500 companies, and others. The headquarters is located in Torrance, CA. The ACT*1 Group provides services under 3 highly respected brands: **AppleOne**, a staffing outfit; **Agile-1**, a workforce solutions company; and **A-Check Global**, a business services organization performing background checks and drug screenings. The ACT*1 Group is the largest privately held woman and minority owned workforce management company in the United States. Reportedly, it has about 2,600 employees worldwide, serves approximately 17,000 clients and operates in 19 countries, 75 U. S. cities and counting.

Janice married Bernard Howroyd (CEO and founder of AppleOne Employment Services) in 1983. According to Cassandra Hayes in a *Black Enterprise* interview in 1998, Jan said, "I was doing over \$10 million in business when I married my husband." The Howroyd's have two children, Katharyn and Brett. They are now young adults and part owners of the Act-1 Group. Jan remains part owner and is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Ms. Bryant Howroyd has received numerous prestigious awards and accolades. She was a guest on NBC's *The Today Show*, a guest on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, featured in *Forbes* Magazine as the country's most successful self-made woman, and designated *Entrepreneur of the Year* by BET cable TV network in 2008. She is a firm believer in giving back and has heavily invested in education. In 1996, she set up an endowment scholarship fund at Edgecombe Community College in Tarboro named, ACT-1 John and Elretha Bryant Family Scholarship. She donated \$10 million dollars each to NC A&T SU and the University of Southern California in 2004 and 2005 respectively. She also donated \$3,000 to W. A. Pattillo High School National Alumni Association (her secondary school alma mater alumni association) in 2013.

On behalf of the President and Board of Directors of the W. A. Pattillo High School National Alumni Association, Inc. We congratulate our 2013 Distinguished alumnus, Janice Bryant Howroyd, on her new Presidential appointment. We are proud of you and we wish you all of the very best life can offer.