

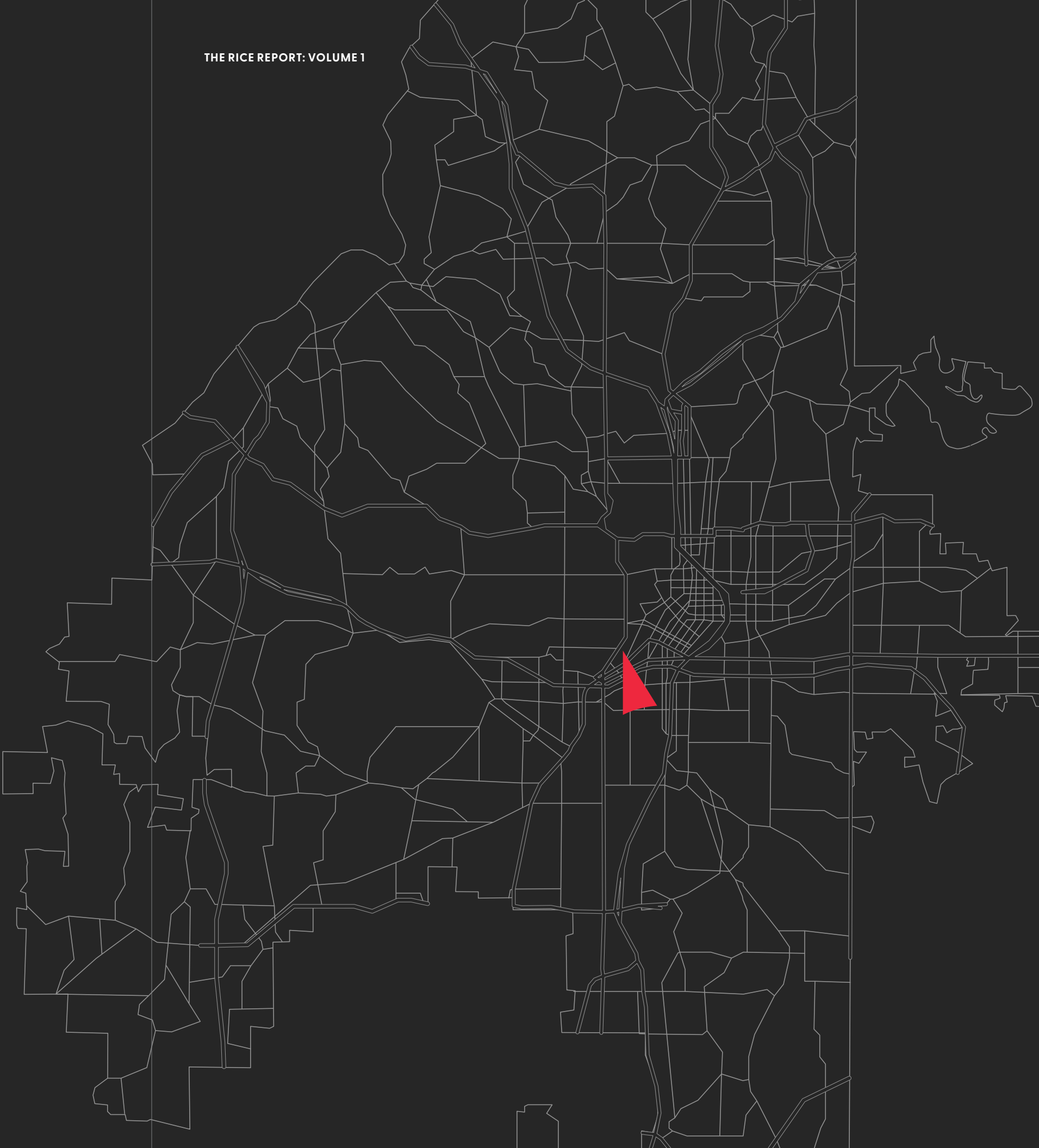


THE RICE REPORT

VOLUME 1
August 2023

Something special is happening on
Atlanta’s Westside.

And we’re just getting started.





A letter from our CEO

When the Russell Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (RCIE) opened its doors in 2019, our mission to inspire and empower Black entrepreneurs became more urgent almost instantly. The COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, escalating cries for social justice, and growing economic uncertainty exacerbated the systemic barriers Black entrepreneurs face. It was a pivotal moment for the country and for us. As organizations shuttered their operations, we doubled down on our mission to respond to the needs of the Black business community. In 2021, we even changed our name to the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs (RICE), tightening our focus on the most important part of the equation—the entrepreneur.

In Atlanta, a city with a storied history of Black entrepreneurship and the nation’s highest number of Black entrepreneurs per capita, Black people have largely been excluded from our city’s vibrant economy. Only four percent of Atlanta’s Black-owned businesses survive the start-up stage. The average value of a Black-owned business is less than one tenth the value of the average White-owned business. These facts are unacceptable.

I’m proud to say though, that RICE is already moving the needle on these disparities. A remarkable 46% of RICE businesses have thrived beyond the start-

up stage, more than ten times the national average. RICE businesses are valued at five times the average value of Atlanta’s Black-owned businesses. So far, our Stakeholders have created hundreds of jobs, generated more than \$100 million in revenue, and driven \$450 million in total economic activity. Our work is gaining momentum.

In just four short years, RICE has expanded to serve more than 350 full-time Stakeholder entrepreneurs and reach more than 10,000 in our extended network. In this same period, we’ve expanded our staff from two team members to thirty-six and increased our operating budget from zero to more than \$6.5 million. This growth has allowed us to provide more than 5,000 hours of technical assistance and launch our Big IDEAS learning platform, Retail Readiness Academy, and Supply Chain Accelerator pilots. Going forward, I expect to see community wealth and shared prosperity grow exponentially as our organization serves more and more Black businesses.

Over the next 10 years, RICE aspires to develop a collaborative community of 1,000 Stakeholder entrepreneurs, create 3,000 new jobs, and contribute \$2 billion in new economic value to the Metro Atlanta region. We will continue to emerge as a collective voice and a trusted partner to some

Jay Bailey at Russell Center
for Innovation and
Entrepreneurship, May 2018

of the world’s leading and most recognizable brands. We will generate more opportunity. And with every success and failure, we will share lessons and best practices with others.

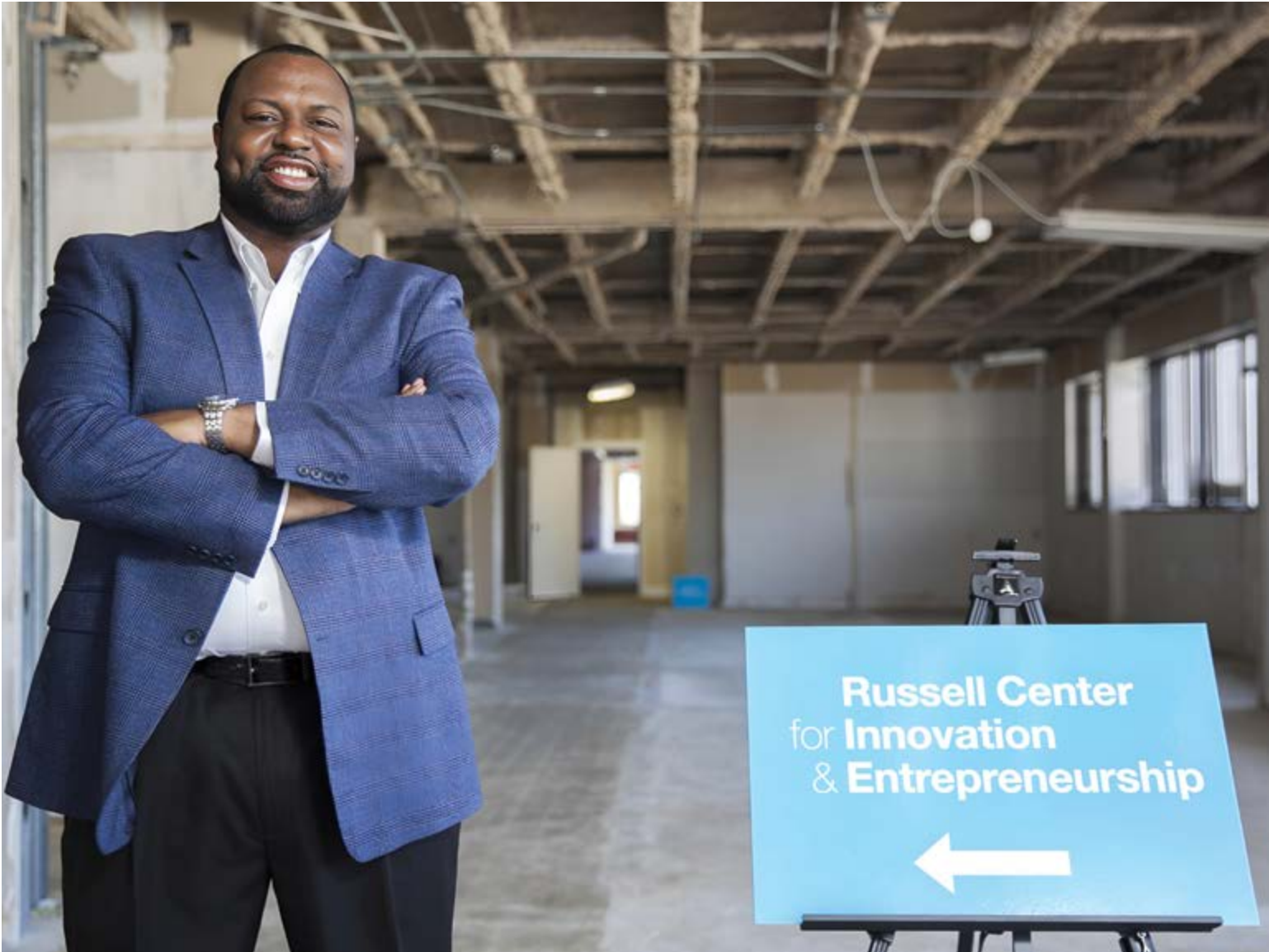
Atlanta is at a crossroads—with RICE squarely at the center, occupying the nexus of access, opportunity, exposure, and impact. We are called to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs and invite all Atlantans, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, to participate and contribute.

Something special is happening on Atlanta’s Westside. It’s game time. I hope you will join us.

Farther together,



James M. “Jay” Bailey
President and CEO



01.

Why We Exist _____ 02

- Context
- Our Roots
- Our Vision and Mission
- Our Aim

03.

Our Impact _____ 46

- Impact Data
- Stakeholder Stories

02.

What We Deliver _____ 18

- Big IDEAS
- Our Space, Our Place
- Our Community and Ecosystem

04.

The RICE Team _____ 56

Why We Exist

- Context
- Our Roots
- Our Vision and Mission
- Our Aim





RUSSELL INNOVATION CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURS

THE RICE REPORT: VOLUME 1

WHY WE EXIST

Why We Exist

Each day, ambitious Black entrepreneurs embark on a journey to create businesses and build wealth. From start up through scale up, they encounter inequity and barriers to progress. Year after year, the data on Black businesses point to glaring gaps in access, opportunity, and exposure.

And yet, in a time when opportunity is not equally distributed, genius abounds.

RICE exists to nurture genius and convert it into greater wealth, with an evidence-based, reliable method for building Black businesses.

We believe it starts with truly seeing Black entrepreneurs and responding to their needs with an understanding, soul, and spirit not offered anywhere else.

RICE is creating a home for Black entrepreneurs.

We exist to build community wealth, with an eye toward future generations. Because success, for us, is not defined by “beating the odds.” It means changing them forever.

The Reality We Face

<1/10

In this country, the median wealth of a Black family is less than one tenth that of the median white family.

11x

In Atlanta, the average White-owned business is valued at nearly 11 times the value of the average Black-owned business.

5x

In Atlanta, Black people are nearly five times more likely than White residents to be unemployed.

4%

Just 4% of Black-owned businesses survive the start-up stage.

<1/3

On average, Black Founders start their businesses with less than one third the capital their white counterparts do.

Sources: US Federal Reserve, McKinsey & Co., National Bureau of Economic Research, Prosperity Now

The Outcomes RICE Seeks

A Sense of Belonging

Black entrepreneurs feel connected, engage deeply, and develop meaningful relationship networks

WHAT WE'RE TRACKING

- Stakeholder engagement (measured via qualitative survey)
- Center utilization + Stakeholder participation

Value Creation

RICE delivers value to Stakeholders who, in turn, create new economic value

WHAT WE'RE TRACKING

- Direct spend with Stakeholders; In-kind services
- New collaborations and partnerships between Stakeholders
- Revenues from RICE-affiliated businesses

Stakeholder Readiness

Stakeholders achieve mastery of critical business-building skills

WHAT WE'RE TRACKING

- Stakeholder readiness assessments
- Qualitative feedback from RICE partners

Scale & Sustainability

More Black businesses thrive over the long term

WHAT WE'RE TRACKING

- Business survival rate (vs. national industry averages)
- New jobs created by RICE-affiliated businesses

Early Proof Points

46%

of RICE entrepreneurs thrive beyond the startup stage, 10x the national average.

1,318

new jobs generated and sustained by RICE-affiliated businesses since 2020.

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Economic Impact Assessment

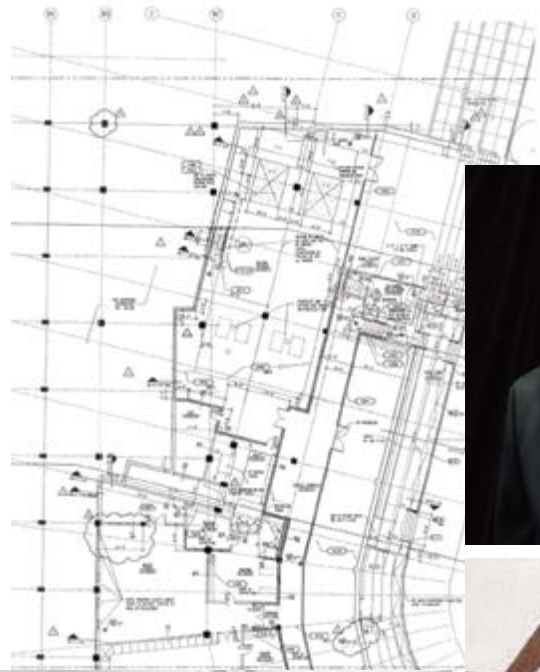
Our Roots

The Russell Center reflects the spirit of an entrepreneur and leader who, through undeniable talent, a generous heart, and unwavering self-belief, achieved what some thought impossible.

RICE is named for **Herman J. Russell**, one of America’s first Black millionaires and a figure who represents the epitome of influential Black entrepreneurship. As a business and civic leader, Russell helped shape the city of Atlanta as we know it today. His legacy includes a deep dedication to philanthropy and a passion for entrepreneurship and education. Mr. Russell saw entrepreneurship as a pathway to wealth and equity for the Black community and, for America, the key to sustained prosperity.

RICE lives on Atlanta’s Westside, in the former headquarters of H.J. Russell & Company. The building is now home to the nation’s largest nonprofit center focused exclusively on Black entrepreneurs.

Our goal is to embody H.J. Russell’s legacy of success rooted in service.



Our Vision

**Black prosperity
multiplied
through business
ownership**

Our Mission

**Build.
Black.
Business.**

We believe in Black business ownership as key to closing the racial wealth gap. We've made building Black business our mission because the long-term health of our community is at stake.

Our
Aim

10

Years

1,000

Businesses

3,000

New Jobs

\$2 Billion

in New Economic Value

Measurable, financial gains driven directly by the RICE ecosystem

Anchored in Belonging

A top priority at RICE is to foster a sense of belonging for Black entrepreneurs, in an institution built by and for them.

We believe an environment of belonging lets people be who they are, comfortably and confidently. We know that when Black entrepreneurs are exposed to creators and businesspeople who look like them, they tap a special source of power, energy, and resilience.

“

This morning, when I crossed the threshold into the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs, I felt an overwhelming sense of belonging. The positive energy from RICE’s staff and Stakeholders really brings out the best in me every time I’m in this ‘safe space.’

”

— Susan Simmons Stevenson

RICE Stakeholder, CEO, The Lifecycle Network



RICE is:

An institution
dedicated to closing the
racial wealth gap

A business generator
focused on growth for
entrepreneurs

A resource for
corporations seeking
business-ready partners

A driver of positive
economic impact for the
Black community

A new type of business
community designed for
the Black entrepreneur
and focused on collective
prosperity

A working lab developing
a research-based
approach to scaling Black
businesses



What We Deliver

Access, Opportunity, Exposure

RICE's Six "C"s

Big IDEAS

Our Space, Our Place

Our Community and Ecosystem



RICE provides:

- ▶ Access
- ▶ Opportunity
- ▶ Exposure

Key ingredients every entrepreneur needs, but not every entrepreneur is offered.

RICE's Six "C"s

Our formula for developing Black businesses



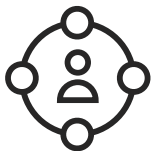
Community

RICE brings Black entrepreneurs together in a spirit of collaboration and service. In our community, entrepreneurs find support, have valuable exchanges, and unlock the power of the collective.



Connections

RICE offers unique access to senior level networks and one-of-a-kind resources. We've engineered an in-house ecosystem of partners that accelerates entrepreneurs in real time.



Curriculum

Big IDEAS is an individualized learning platform that addresses the whole entrepreneur, weaving together practical training with personal wellness and hands-on experience.



Capital

RICE is addressing the challenge of access to capital by connecting banks, angel investors, VCs, and CDFIs with Stakeholder businesses that are investment- and loan-ready



Coaching

RICE provides one-on-one time with seasoned entrepreneurs and business leaders. These advisors and mentors inspire our entrepreneurs to believe in themselves, dig deep into the work, and imagine the impossible.



Culture

A culture of belonging, support, and freedom. We're creating a true home for Black entrepreneurs.

We're doing things differently, with an uncommon, tailored approach to serving Black entrepreneurs.

Nurturing Big IDEAS

Big IDEAS, our signature learning platform, serves entrepreneurs from start up through scale up. It's designed with intent to:

Meet entrepreneurs where they are

We meet businesses where they are today—from early concept to growing business—and create pathways that lead them to where they want to be.

Deliver transformation for the whole entrepreneur

We emphasize real-world exposure and wellness to nurture confidence, resilience, and belief without ignoring the loneliness, anxiety, and isolation common on an entrepreneur's journey.

Develop mastery

We take a patient approach to ensure RICE entrepreneurs emerge from our experience with unquestionable knowledge, skills, and acumen.

Offer continuous support

We commit to entrepreneurs for the long term, providing support throughout the life cycle of their businesses. Our relationship with each entrepreneur allows us to deepen and shape our support as needed.

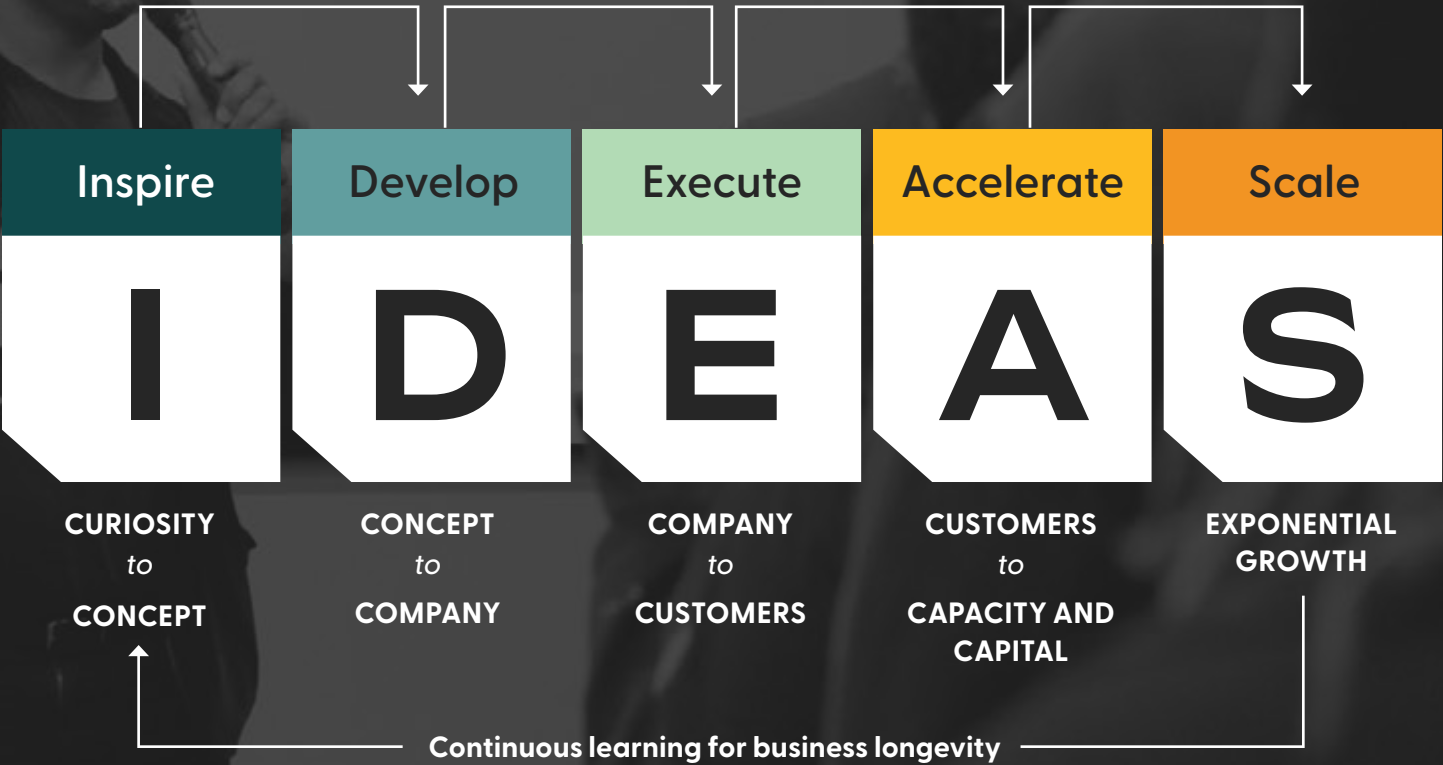
The Big IDEAS Learning Platform

Big IDEAS guides each entrepreneur as they develop their action plan for creating a sustainable business—step by step, from ideation, through execution, to scale.

Entrepreneurs enter at the stage appropriate for them and progress at their own pace. Along the way, they are supported by a team of subject matter experts and a faculty focused on making mastery and excellence the default.

In addition to group learning sessions, our platform features unique hands-on experiences and holistic, community-driven development.

To assess and assure mastery at each stage, Big IDEAS adheres to a rigorous set of “Readiness Indicators.”



Hands-On

Logistics Launchpad and Innovation Lab

Taking Innovation to Market

RICE’s Logistics Launchpad offers hands-on experience and exposure to the state of the art in advanced manufacturing and e-commerce.

At the Launchpad, early-stage and existing product-based companies build, test, produce, pack, ship, and store product all in a single location. In the process, entrepreneurs master sales management, inventory tracking, and order fulfillment for e-commerce.

The Launchpad also features an Innovation Lab that gives entrepreneurs access to 3-D printing for rapid prototyping. As entrepreneurs iterate on concepts in the Lab, they can strengthen their knowledge through complementary courses in product development and advanced manufacturing.

Retail Readiness Academy

Retail Ready

The RICE Retail Readiness Academy positions each entrepreneur and small business for long-term success through a comprehensive experience that:

- Focuses on the critical aspects of successfully scaling a retail business
- Covers all areas from sourcing and manufacturing to fulfillment and customer experience
- Provides hands-on learning in collaboration with retail industry experts and practitioners
- Employs a range of learning modes to create a transformational process

Supply Chain Accelerator

Contract Ready

Ongoing support beginning with an immersive, 10-month experience designed to:

- Create more access in purchasing and procurement for Black entrepreneurs
- Reverse engineer and demystify supply chain and contracting processes
- Engage with industry leading companies and executives
- Create RICE-certified businesses to complement SBA/GMSDC certification

Entrepreneurs leave the Supply Chain Accelerator ready to do business with Fortune 500 companies or government agencies.



Holistic



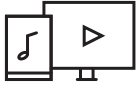







Whole Entrepreneur Development

RICE believes our health is our greatest wealth. An essential component of the Big IDEAS platform is our focus on the whole entrepreneur. While we are helping entrepreneurs develop businesses, we are also helping them develop personally. Through Big IDEAS, we provide content, resources, and services that address mental health, emotional wellbeing, assertiveness and boundaries, the importance of relationships, and decision-making skills. Importantly, Big IDEAS encourages and motivates entrepreneurs to persist in spite of the challenging situations and difficult cycles they'll inevitably face.

Community-Driven

Industry Tribes

RICE's Industry Tribes are networking groups where like-minded entrepreneurs in similar industries connect to build relationships and exchange ideas, resources, and referrals. This community-driven component unlocks the collective power that resides here.

	Entertainment & Media		Public Service
	Food, Beverage, & Agriculture		Real Estate & Construction
	Manufacturing & Distribution		Retail & E-commerce
	Professional Services		Technology & Innovation

“

It's beautiful to see how quickly we've grown as a collective and are providing inspiration to others in business around the U.S. and abroad. We are making intentional, results-driven strides like no other! I'm always ecstatic to share that I am a Founding 100 Stakeholder of the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs.

”

— L'Angela Lee

RICE Stakeholder, Founder, Honeysuckle Moon

“

RICE is constantly evolving, adding more space and ways for Stakeholders to run and grow their businesses. This place is always buzzing with activity and the energy is palpable!

”

— Dr. Bianca Kiovanni

RICE Stakeholder, Owner/Founder, Simplicity Beverage Company

Our Space, Our Place

RICE offers an environment unlike any other by concentrating the best resources available to entrepreneurs and growing businesses in one place. We offer purpose-built spaces for collaboration, convening, and innovation, as well as state-of-the-art resources like the RICE Podcast Studio for content creation, the Image Studio for brand development, and the Logistics Launchpad for e-commerce and rapid prototyping.

Currently at 54,000 square feet, the Russell Center is the nation's largest nonprofit center focused exclusively on Black entrepreneurs.

RICE welcomes thousands of visitors every month and hosts, on average, more than 25 community events per week. In this environment, entrepreneurs are surrounded with the tools and energy they need to move faster toward milestones.

80,000

VISITORS EXPERIENCED RICE IN 2022



THE RICE REPORT: VOLUME 1

WHAT WE DELIVER



Building with Intention



RICE is fiercely intentional about enlisting Black entrepreneurs to help build, maintain, and enhance the Center. We make it our practice to choose Black-owned businesses that provide products and services ranging from construction management to food and beverage to IT consulting.

A/V Support:
INEX Systems & Designs

Architectural Design:
Xmetrical

Plants and Greenery:
The Plant Peddler

Furniture Design and Manufacture:
Reclaimed Karma

Window Treatments:
Raynard's Blinds Installation & Repairs

\$19.5M+

Direct spend with Black businesses
to date



The Honorable Andre Dickens
Mayor, City of Atlanta



The Honorable Brian P. Kemp
Governor, State of Georgia



Brian Cornell
Chair and CEO, Target Corporation



Rosalind Brewer
CEO, Walgreens



Jamie Dimon
Chairman and CEO, JP Morgan Chase & Co.



Carol Tomé
CEO, UPS



Robert F. Smith
*Chairman and CEO,
Vista Equity Partners*



Joe Gebbia
Co-Founder, Airbnb



Thasunda Duckett
President and CEO, TIAA



Tony Ressler
*Co-Founder and Executive
Chairman, Ares Management
Corporation
Principal Owner, Atlanta Hawks*

We Attract Excellence

These are just some of the individuals who have recently paid a visit to RICE. Every week, some of the world's most influential business leaders walk our hallways.

“

I am honored to be a part of the RICE community and I am excited to work alongside the RICE team to build a brighter future for Black-owned businesses.

”

— Morale Ocain
RICE Stakeholder, Founder, All Things Hair



Creating a Home

A Community That Embraces and Enriches Entrepreneurs

Commitment and covenant that connect RICE entrepreneurs to each other and to a purpose bigger than business

Exchanges and collisions through multiple community events and curated gatherings

Uncommon access to inspiration and expertise

Collective power created through close proximity and continuous collaboration

Inspired by Motown, Silicon Valley, the Harlem Renaissance, and HBCUs, we're creating the conditions for Black entrepreneurs to thrive.



A Powerful Ecosystem

Our partnerships allow RICE to deliver a truly unique proposition:
Best-in-class resources curated to address the full spectrum of Black entrepreneurs’ needs – all under one roof.



Our Impact

Impact Data

Stakeholder Stories



Something special is happening on Atlanta’s Westside...

10,000

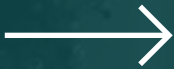
Entrepreneurs reached in 2022 through RICE and its partners

\$19.5M+

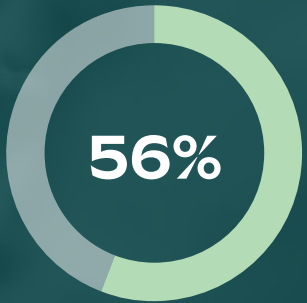
Direct spend with Black businesses to date

350+

Stakeholders



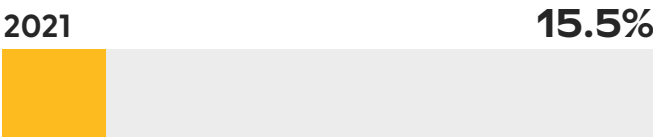
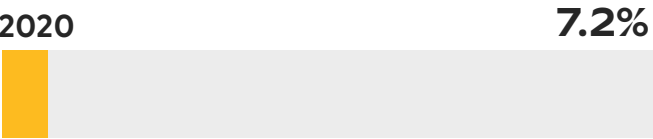
ARE BLACK OR PEOPLE OF COLOR



ARE WOMEN

OUR TOP SIX INDUSTRIES: CONSULTING, RETAIL, TECHNOLOGY, REAL ESTATE, HEALTH CARE, BUSINESS SERVICES

At RICE, businesses are growing...



Year-over-year growth in average Stakeholder revenue

\$114M

Total annual revenue generated by RICE Stakeholder businesses

\$2.725M

in grants awarded to Black businesses through direct connection to RICE

\$590K+

in equity investments raised by Stakeholder businesses

\$910K+

in loans secured by Stakeholder businesses

...creating value...

\$60M+

New revenue generated by Stakeholders since engaging with RICE

1,318

Jobs sustained by Stakeholder businesses since 2020

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Economic Impact Assessment

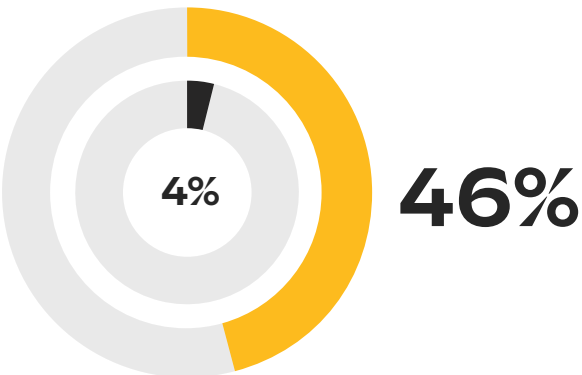
\$450M

Total economic activity since 2020

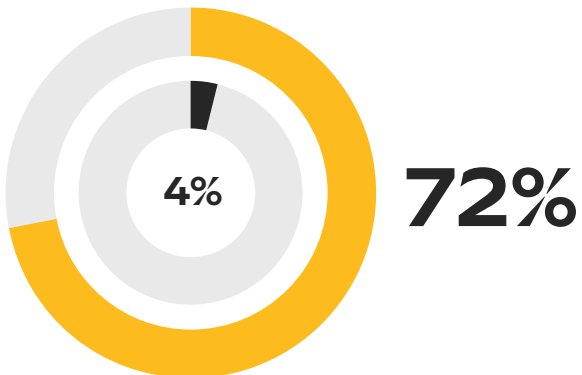
Total economic activity defined as a combination of gross and total county outputs, and disposable personal income for residents.

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission Economic Impact Assessment

...and outperforming.



of RICE Stakeholder businesses thrive beyond the startup stage. The average survival rate for Black-owned startups is 4%.



of RICE Stakeholder businesses employ one or more people. The average rate among Atlanta’s Black-owned businesses is 4%.

RICE STAKEHOLDER STORIES

Affording Greater Access

M-T Strickland & Metric Mate

Metric Mate is a visionary fitness technology company that has been a RICE stakeholder since 2019. Over the past several years, RICE has profoundly shaped Co-Founder M-T Strickland's business and journey as an entrepreneur.

RICE has walked alongside Metric Mate—from concept phase to the company's first \$10,000 in revenue to making an appearance on ABC's Shark Tank. M-T attributes a large part of his company's ability to overcome challenges and constraints to the combination of RICE's Big IDEAS learning platform and one-on-one time with experienced business advisors.

A defining moment for Metric Mate came when, through participation in RICE's Supply Chain Accelerator, the company was able to make inroads with a significant new customer. Through the Accelerator, RICE opened doors and shortened the path to decision makers at Walt Disney Company. M-T shared, "We didn't know what was feasible but now we are working on a pilot to take Metric Mate technology to the Disney ecosystem. I can honestly say that wouldn't have happened without RICE."

In addition, RICE's Logistics Launchpad has helped streamline Metric Mate's operations. Strickland says, "The Launchpad has allowed me to get my hands out of shipping and fulfillment. And the fact that we have access to personnel that can help us navigate complexity in our supply chain is so beneficial. For me, access is the number one thing [RICE] provides."

"Being a part of the RICE community has been an absolute game changer. Through RICE, I have access to organizations and individuals that have already seen and been where we are going."

—M-T STRICKLAND

RICE STAKEHOLDER STORIES

Opening More Opportunity

Channing Baker & FS360

Channing Baker has had a remarkable journey of growth and success that he attributes to his engagement with RICE. Baker first encountered RICE in 2018, during his tenure as Director of Operations at general contracting and construction management firm, FS360. While leading the first phase of renovations at the Center, Channing became enamored with RICE’s mission to uplift and empower Black businesses. Little did he know, this moment would mark the beginning of a life-changing relationship.

As fate would have it, being a RICE Stakeholder opened doors for an unexpected opportunity for Channing and FS360. Following an introduction from RICE, JP Morgan Chase offered FS360 the extraordinary opportunity to build out retail locations nationwide for the bank. With RICE’s support, FS360 then navigated Chase’s partner onboarding process quickly and smoothly.

“We went through the process with JP Morgan Chase in a fourth of the time it normally would have taken. Our onboarding process took only 3 months...and 5 years later we’re handling \$24 million worth of bank projects.”

As a RICE Stakeholder, Baker has personally experienced remarkable growth. RICE has been the catalyst for his latest foray into entrepreneurship with Clayton Channing Consulting. He describes RICE as the place where he’s learned the critical elements of running a successful business. And all the while, Baker praises RICE for the Center’s genuine desire to see every entrepreneur succeed.

“I am on track to reach my goals for the year because of the opportunities and exposure to new relationships I receive as a Stakeholder here at RICE.”

—CHANNING BAKER





RICE STAKEHOLDER STORIES

Providing Uncommon Exposure

Jamia Ramsey & Blendz Apparel

Jamia Ramsey, visionary Founder of Blendz Apparel, can attest to the fact that RICE is indeed a place where dreams take flight. Before becoming a RICE Stakeholder in 2022, Jamia and Blendz Apparel had already begun to revolutionize the dance industry with flesh-tone dance tights.

Since joining the RICE community, Jamia has gained valuable exposure to the Fortune 500 corporations that regularly engage with the RICE ecosystem. Through these experiences, Jamia has learned from some of the best, received direct assistance in building the Blendz brand, and deepened her understanding of her own business model and growth opportunities.

For example, Jamia and a delegation of RICE entrepreneurs got a glimpse into the future of retail and met with Walmart and Procter & Gamble executives during a visit to P&G headquarters in Cincinnati. While there, Jamia had the opportunity to contribute feedback and lend her voice as a Black entrepreneur. As a result of the exposure she received, Jamia came away inspired to position Blendz as a premium brand and get laser-focused on serving the needs of discerning dancers.

“Overall, being at RICE, networking with different people, and getting to meet these executives helps relationship-wise and makes me feel great. Before RICE, I really didn’t have an opportunity to meet a lot of people in the corporate world, in entrepreneurship, or in business. With RICE, there are always things going on. You always have an opportunity to meet great people.”

—JAMIA RAMSEY

The RICE Team

04

The RICE Team and Board remain dedicated to realizing our vision of Black prosperity multiplied through business ownership.

Board of Directors

H. Jerome Russell, Jr. Board Chair President, H.J. Russell & Company	Donata Russell Ross President and CEO, Concessions International	Sylvia Russell Retired, Former President, AT&T Georgia
Robert Benson Partner, King & Spalding	Carla Chaney EVP, CHRO, Equifax, Inc	Ann Cramer Senior Consultant, Coxe Curry & Associates
Cynthia Day President and CEO, Citizens Trust Bank	Vivian Greentree Senior Vice President, Head of Global Corporate Citizenship, Fiserv	Ernest Greer* Co-President, Greenberg Traurig <small>*Term ended 2023</small>
Alfred McRae President, Bank of America Atlanta	Sig Mosley Managing Partner, Mosley Ventures	T. Dallas Smith Founder and CEO, T. Dallas Smith & Company

Team

Jay Bailey President and CEO	DeAndre Holt Program Manager, Execute Stage
Burunda Prince Chief Operating Officer	Shanda Ingram Program Manager, Develop Stage
Paul Wilson, Jr. VP of Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Fred Jones Program Manager, Inspire Stage
Brittany Saadiq, CFRE VP of Development	Nicole Brown Program Coordinator
Dr. Malcolm Muhammad VP of Engagement and Outcomes	Renyata Finney Social Media Coordinator
Shalon Brown Director of Marketing & Communications	Justin Clark Development Manager
Shakiri Murrain Director of Innovation	Janazya Thurman Development Manager (Operations)
Jasmine Tiara Director of Community	Kenya Asbil EDA Project Manager
Raquel Hill Executive Assistant to the CEO	Justin Kirnon Community Engagement Specialist
Maria Henry Executive Assistant to the COO	Marlon Correa Events Manager
Karen Everage Sr. Program Manager	Crystal Clarke Warehouse Manager
Lawrence Iweriebor Sr. Data Analyst	Jason Collins Graphic Designer
Dr. Dawn Sizemore Instructional Designer/E-Learning Specialist	Kela Taylor Events Administrator
LaShunda Campbell External Communications Manager	Mike Cortez Events Assistant
Ashley Scott Internal Communications Manager	Shakirah DeMesier Technical Assistant
Quintin Bostic Program Manager, Supply Chain Accelerator	LaTia Dozier Staff Accountant
Paul Mayberry Program Manager, Accelerate Stage	Aisha Hassan Engagement Specialist
	Jasmine Smith Receptionist

“

As Chairman of the Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs, I am driven by the belief that innovation is the heartbeat of progress. Our center serves as Atlanta’s nexus where ideas and aspirations converge, igniting the flames of entrepreneurship. It’s not just about fostering businesses; it’s about empowering visionaries to shape a better tomorrow through their creativity, dedication, and unwavering spirit. Together, we cultivate a community where innovation isn’t just a concept—it’s a way of life.

”

— H. Jerome Russell, Jr.
Chairman of the Board, RICE
President, H.J. Russell & Company



We’re building Black businesses with a community of experts, mentors, amplifiers, and generous supporters.

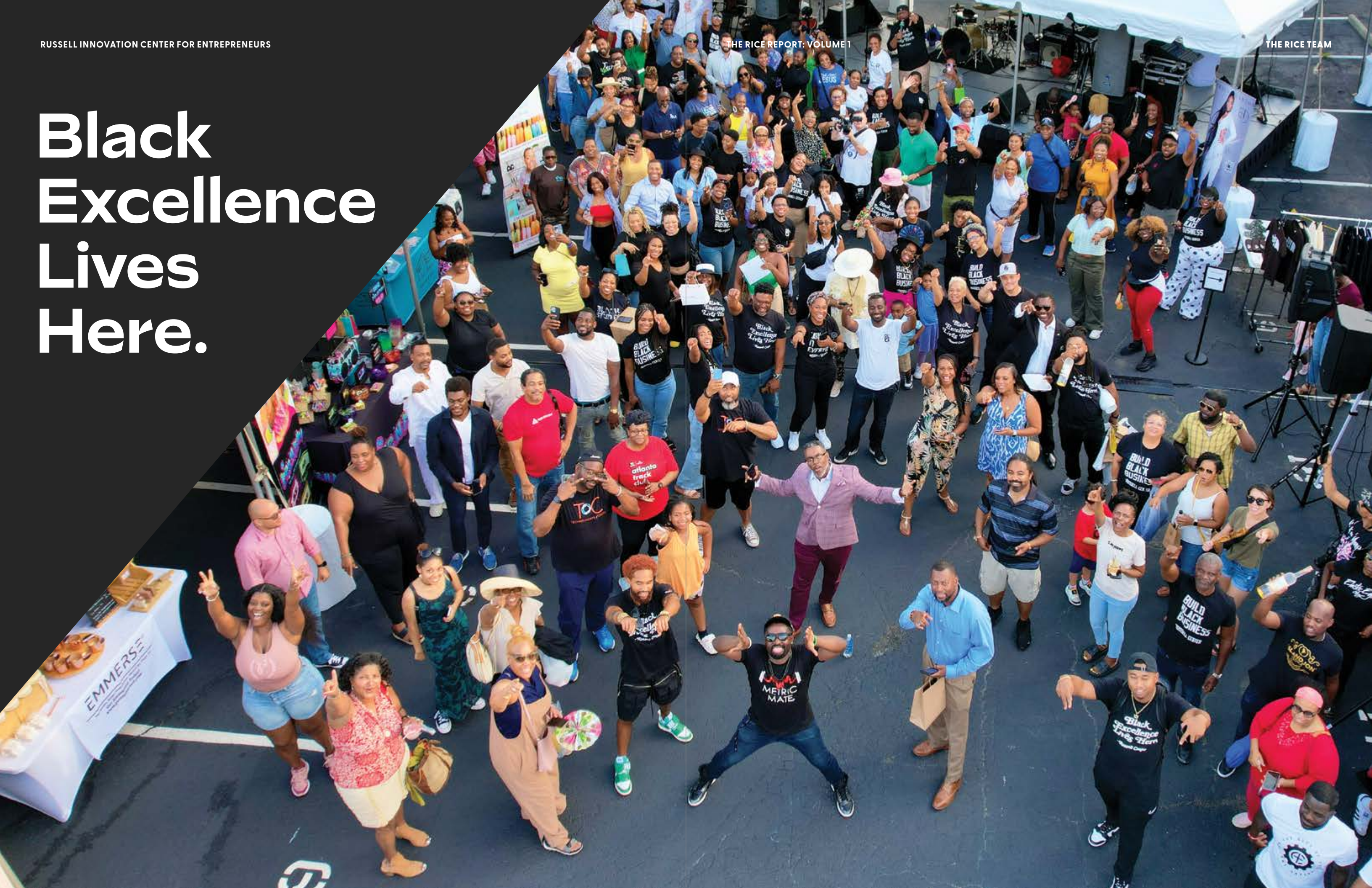
Accenture
Ameris Bank
Ann M. and Thomas M. Holder Foundation
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arthur Clement
Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation
Artis Johnson
AT&T Foundation
Atlanta Wealth Building Initiative
Bank of America
Bank OZK
Blackrock
Bruce and Iris Feinberg
Bryan Rand
Cascade United Methodist Church
Cash App/Square
Chick-fil-A Foundation
Clorox Foundation
Columbia Residential
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Dallas Community Works
Dan Amos Family Foundation
Deloitte
Delta Airlines
Delta Community Credit Union
Douglas County Chamber of Commerce
Dr. William F. Pickard
Equifax/MoCaFi
Equitable Advisors
Fifth Third Foundation
Fiserv
Frazier & Deeter
Fulton County
Google
Iris & Bruce Feinberg
Jabian Consulting
Jackson Spalding
JP Morgan Chase
Kapor Foundation
Kelin Foundation
Kendeda Fund

King & Spalding
LISC
Live Oak Bank
Mastercard
McKinsey & Company
Mr. & Mrs. Pete Correll
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US Department of Commerce
US Department of Energy
US Economic Development Administration
US Small Business Administration (NAV-GA)
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RICE
504 Fair Street SW
Atlanta, GA 30313
www.RussellCenter.org

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