AGLCC Past President Returns to Foster Deeper Corporate Engagement via New Role as Corporate Partner Relationship Manager

AGLCC Past President, Sheila Merritt, Returns to the AGLCC to Create Economic Opportunity for the LGBTA Community in Atlanta

ATLANTA, July 19, 2016—In recent years the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (AGLCC) has experienced phenomenal growth among its LGBT and ally members and corporate partners. As a primarily volunteer-driven organization, the AGLCC's Board of Directors has grown the organization from 19 corporate partners in early 2015, to 34 corporate partners and counting.

"With so many key relationships at stake, we knew it was time to invest more deeply in delivering a premium experience for our Corporate Partners. Sheila brings so much to this role – passion for the cause, deep relationships in Atlanta's LGBTA business community, and a very graceful knack for connecting people and engaging them in service," says Jack Kinley, President of the AGLCC.

If it sounds like there's an air of familiarity in Kinley's first-name referral to Merritt, it's because there is. Merritt's service to the AGLCC includes five years on the board—including terms as Vice President and President of the organization. She has also been honored as AGLCC's Business Woman of the Year at the organization's Annual Community Awards Dinner.

"While our state legislators continue to introduce so-called religious freedom policies that actively promote LGBT discrimination in our home state, it has been our corporate partners who have advocated for the role of diversity and inclusion in creating a thriving economy for all Georgians," said Kinley. "We owe a lot to these businesses who have risked and endured economic backlash and still advocated on behalf of the LGBT community. Sheila's role, in part, is to help us promote these business allies and build an engaged base of customers, vendors and employees to help them thrive. We couldn't think of a better person to help us lead this charge."

In regards to Merritt's vision for the role and the future of the AGLCC, she says that she hopes to facilitate "an expansion of awareness and participation by more and more of Atlanta's corporate community with the AGLCC. And at the same time, my intent is to improve the experience of our existing partners, providing exemplary customer service and exceeding their partnership goals and objectives."

Merritt will join Kinley at the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce's annual International Business & Leadership Conference in August to facilitate a planning session that helps local LGBT chambers of commerce create engaging programming and services to promote and engage corporate partners.

Merritt will also join AGLCC media sponsors Midtown Business Radio X on air on Tuesday, July 19 at 10:30 a.m. at midtown.businessradiox.com to speak with AGLCC Past President, Emma Foulkes and AGLCC Networking Coordinator, Bruce Logue about her vision for her new role with the AGLCC.

The AGLCC gratefully acknowledges the leadership and devotion of our corporate partners in growing our organization, empowering LGBT business owners, and creating safe spaces for LGBT people to thrive at work. We hope that Sheila's role as Corporate Partner Relationship Manager will boost our corporate partners' visibility in the LGBTA community and help them achieve their business goals through deeper engagement with the AGLLC.

About the Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
The Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (AGLCC) exists to promote the economic growth and advancement of our LGBT and allied business members, our non-profit organizational members as well as our corporate partners.

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Media file for Midtown Business Radio X available after broadcast upon request and at facebook.com/theAGLCC