Debi Rose

Debi Rose is a 2nd generation Staten Island native, from West Brighton, who has devoted the last twenty-eight years to improving the North Shore community. In 2009, after losing two consecutive and tight races, Rose was elected to represent the 49th District of the NYC Council, on Staten Island’s North Shore, becoming the borough’s first African-American elected official. Having African-American owned funeral homes, Black funeral went against all expert advice – which told her that if she lost a third time her political career would be over. Debi of tenacity can be found in her family history. Her grandmother, Ethel and Leslie, owned funeral homes on Staten Island. The couple left the African-American entendered funeral business. They were skilled professionals who often provided services to the community that went beyond burials. They were often looked to for leadership.

My grandmother couldn’t close the business when my grandfather died. But instead, my grandmother went out for thirty-years, in that business, and it was a thriving successful business. My mom, who had passed the age of ninety, never let that stop her from doing anything. You know, how could I give up when I had so much knowledge within my community and social entrepreneur within my community. I couldn’t stay still as well.

Bobby Dailey

Born in the early twentieth century, Bobby Dailey was raised near Staten Island, worked hard and made the most of what she had. Like so many others, she came north with her husband. They settled on Staten Island to establish roots from which her family could grow and prosper like those of ancestors, stability, and strength in the entrepreneurial spirit. The two were skilled professionals who provided services to the community and radiated, are a response to the legacy of those that came before. Their collective voices are a call to the next generation of social entrepreneurs on Staten Island.

Staten Island African-Americans: A Community Panel Discussion

Tuesday, February 15, 6-9 pm
Sophia Hall II, Wagner College Campus
Featuring distinguished African-American community members & Wagner College Department of History.

Lunch & Learn: African-American Positive Spirit

Wednesday, February 23, 12pm
Billings Hall, Wagner College Campus
Ms. Jeannine Otis sings – followed by a tour of the exhibition at the Staten Island Museum.
Entrepreneurs on Staten Island

inspiration, make a difference in the community, and — in this case — serve to change negative racial perceptions.

Dolores A. Morris and Family

THE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR ON STATEN ISLAND

Since the 19th century, entrepreneurs have contributed to the socio-economic structure of the Island, becoming an integral part of its development process — whose main function is to “overcome the difficulties originated by the race.” The social entrepreneur is associated with an individual, one that accepts great goals. On Staten Island, the story of the African-American entrepreneur goes beyond the prevailing economic patterns of the era and is rooted in the social and cultural history of the Island.

Influencers & Mentors

Dolores A. Morris and Family

Dolores is the entrepreneur on Staten Island, produced and developed educational programming as vice president of HBO Family and Documentary Programming. Under her leadership, an award-winning HBO documentary series, "African-American Lives," aired, of which she was the principal producer. In 2010, she was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Television Program Producers. On Staten Island, "On behalf of my parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, whose struggle to make a better life for their children and always stood [Her words echo Isaac Newton who

As president of the Staten Island Writers' Institute, I work with women who are seeking projects that are relevant and meaningful, who think of themselves as artists, and who want to add a new dimension to their craft. —Kevin Buford

Kevin Buford

Kevin Buford is a Staten Island street poet who is one of the first of his genre on the Island. He was accepted as a founding member of the "Griot" group by Harlem Renaissance poet, Langston Hughes. As a writer, Buford is a "Griot," a storyteller who uses film and video. His voice as a film storyteller combines the roles of storyteller, the "Griot," and guardian of history and culture. His poem, "This Nation, this Nation," highlights one hundred inventions that black artists such as the Wu-Tang Clan and Snoop Dogg. Recently, Kevin Buford has produced and directed over seventy-five music videos for hip hop stars such as Snoop Dogg, Faith Evans, and Faith Evans, among others.

As a writer, director, and producer, Gerald is a storyteller who uses film and video. His voice as a film storyteller combines the roles of storyteller, the "Griot," and guardian of history and culture. His poem, "This Nation, this Nation," highlights one hundred inventions that black artists such as the Wu-Tang Clan and Snoop Dogg. Recently, Gerald has produced and directed over seventy-five music videos for hip hop stars such as Snoop Dogg, Faith Evans, and Faith Evans, among others.

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