

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce has implemented three goals in our new strategic plan. Two of our goals are to attract and serve a diverse group of members from all industries representing businesses in Greater Bethesda and to grow awareness of the Chamber among both members and the public.

Living up to these principles, we invite you to celebrate Black History Month with us through our third annual member spotlight series. This special feature helps our communities learn more about some of its leaders and their impacts they make every day.

Today, we would like you to get to know **Brandan Stuckey, Marketing and Outreach Manager for Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS), a division of Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP).**

Brandan is a native of Birmingham, Alabama. There he created community lead Bike rides around important Black History landmarks designed to promote Bikeshare usage and teach critical riding skills, and cultural awareness of the city's history. He also brokered a deal between Bikeshare and public housing to provide bike memberships for residents. Now in Maryland, Brandan has led several biking and commuter initiatives including Walk & Ride, Bike to Workday, and the currently running Cool Commute Campaign, just to name a few. In addition to his work responsibilities Brandan is a 2022 Association of Commuter Transportation Top 40 Under 40 recipient, a former member of the Board of Directors of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce, former Co-Chair of the GBCC's NextExecs (Young Professionals) Group, a 2022 Graduate of the Emerging Leaders program of Leadership Montgomery, member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., certified drone pilot, and proud husband and father.

We asked Brandan three questions surrounding leadership and goals. Read his responses below.

1. As you look back over your life, at what point did you begin to think of yourself as a leader?

Assessments are important because you spend most of your early life following, whether it's your parents, pastors, or politicians. These people tend to shape your world view and it's important to assess what you've learned and what you will impact upon those who may follow your message. You're only as good a leader as those willing to follow you. Good leaders have an ability to be present in the moments that life gives you but are also not consumed by those moments because there will be another sooner or later. I think throughout my life I've done a good job of making these assessments. I've always gone in the opposite direction of the crowd because there's something to be learned from everything you encounter, whether you're with the crowd or not. My leadership experience has taught me that in this life, there will always be problems; however, the solutions only become available to those of us who emerge as leaders. As my leadership capabilities evolve, I think I will continue to look for opportunities to emerge.

2. Do you have a vision that guides your body of work? If so, has it changed over time or remain the same?

I believe, in everything you face, you must see it through. You never know what life is about to throw your way. So many of us want to only experience triumph but so often to get to the joys of life, you must

trudge through tragedy to get there. The challenges change, but the vision remains the same. See it through!

3. Does the work you do now play a part in the legacy you wish to leave behind? If not, describe what tools you need to help you achieve your goals.

There's a poem by William Dromgoole called "The Bridge Builder." In it, an old man had reached the end of his leadership journey with one last ride in him. He realized that for all he'd accomplished, it won't mean anything if he doesn't become an advocate for the next person who may be at the beginning of their leadership journey. Because of this, he built a bridge that covered the cracks and missteps that he encountered. Everyone needs an advocate. I feel like in all that I do, as I collaborate with colleagues on transit projects or learn about policy issues in my local community, that the legacy I leave is a path of advocacy for the next generation, void of as many pitfalls as I can help them avoid and inspire another generation of bridge builders!

Visit www.bethesdatransit.org to learn more about the ongoing efforts of BTS and their resources available to both businesses and residents of Downtown Bethesda.