

AN ORANGE COUNTY BUSINESS JOURNAL SPECIAL REPORT

# CELEBRATING BLACK BUSINESS

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# Naturade: Bringing Clean Eating to Prediabetics

## RETAIL: Strikes new deals with Target, Costco

■ By AUDREY KEMP

Claude Tellis is the son of **Louisiana State University Medical School's** first Black graduate. He knew he had big shoes to fill.

"I couldn't force myself to go the medical school route like my dad, so I chose the business route," he said.

"That way, I could be the next best thing: the father of preventative health in the Black community."

Tellis' career path has forged many firsts of its own.

Tellis is CEO of **Naturade Inc.**, an Irvine-based vegan nutrition company on a mission to encourage the prediabetic Black community to adopt healthier diets.

It's among the faster-growing businesses of its type in the country, thanks to several breakout partnerships.

A year ago, the company debuted at **Costco**, becoming what the company says is the retail giant's first Black-owned nutrition vendor in its history.

Several other notable accomplishments took place in 2021: the firm earned the **Earvin Magic Johnson Business and Healthcare Award**, the **Duke Fuqua School of Business May-Penn Award of Excellence**, and the **Nutrition Business Journal Mission and Philanthropy Award**.

In September, Tellis was also honored as one of six winners at the Business Journal's seventh annual **Innovator of the Year Awards**.

### Attacking Diabetes

According to Tellis, people of color often live in areas where healthful food is scarce, called food deserts, which puts them at a predisposition to develop Type 2 diabetes. By partnering with several large retailers, Naturade aims to bring healthy food to the most underserved corners of the country.

"We are working to solve a food justice issue," he said. "Now, the same nutrition options people have in Beverly Hills and Santa Monica, are available to folks in neighborhoods with bodegas and liquor stores."

A **John Hopkins** study suggests that prediabetics who lose about 10% of their body weight dramatically reduce their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

"Many of my family members are in this category. Our goal is to make that super obvious to people like my family."

### Impacting Food Access

Tellis met his now-business-partner **Kareem Cook** while studying business at **Duke University**.

Cook, who grew up in the Bronx's housing projects, always found it unfair that his mother had to take a bus and a train to get to a good grocery store, according to Tellis. Both men had family members with diabetes and cancer.

"We knew we wanted to impact food access in our careers," he added.

### Naturade Inc.

**NATURADE**  
EST. 1926

- **FOUNDED:** 1926; purchased in 2012
- **CEO:** Claude Tellis
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Irvine
- **BUSINESS:** plant-based nutrition products
- **EMPLOYEES:** 30
- **NOTABLE:** struck distribution deals with Target, Costco, Amazon and Walmart



Kareem Cook and Claude Tellis  
Owners  
Naturade

They started with a healthy vending machine company, and took their mission to Sacramento, and successfully banned junk food throughout California's public school system in 2002.

"That began our entrepreneurial journey together," he said.

Then, they made their move to California, and in 2012, acquired Naturade, a near 100-year-old health and wellness brand. They established the company's roots in Southern California—"the heartbeat of the health and wellness industry" and employ some 30 workers today.

Currently, Naturade offers 40 different plant-based products, from meal replacement shakes and protein powders, to vitamins and supplements. The company's popular weight-loss shake **VeganSmart** retails on **Amazon** for \$25, meaning each serving costs under \$2.

While adding fruits and vegetables is highly encouraged, "all you have to do is mix it with water, shake it, and boom," Tellis said. "It tastes like \$1 million."

### 'The Biggest and the Best'

In recent years, Tellis and Cook have worked hard to develop the Naturade brand, and revenue has grown about 25% annually. The firm counts backers such as **NBA** players-turned-entrepreneurs **Magic Johnson** and **Grant Hill**.

Tellis hopes to double or triple sales numbers this year, due in part to partnering with "the biggest and the best"—**Costco**, **Target**, **Whole Foods** and **Walmart**, he said.

Since the killing of **George Floyd** in 2020, Target has enlisted minorities to senior positions and partnered with several Black-owned companies like Naturade.

"Instead of running from the problem, they ran to it and listened to the young folks about what to change in their communities. They created solutions," Tellis said, adding that Naturade products can be found on the shelves of 250 different Target stores today.

The company is also working with **Whole Foods' Whole Cities Foundation**, a \$150,000 grant program that supports community efforts to grow fresh produce in food deserts.

Naturade is also "doubling the mean" in Costco, selling 2,000 products in-store per week.

"We're excited," he added. "We believe we identified an opportunity gap, and we're hit-

### Products from Irvine-based vegan nutrition firm



Naturade's VeganSmart: a meal replacement weight-loss shake

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# Chef Tico Rico's Hot Sauce Breakout

## FOOD: San Clemente chef recreates Costa Rican flavor

■ By EMILY SANTIAGO-MOLINA

Chef **Rich Taylor**, dubbed Chef Tico Rico, has plans to spice up the local hot sauce community.

With two main sauces and a third seasonal bottle made under the **Tico Rico** name, Taylor's efforts are focused on creating a product with not just heat but great flavor and natural ingredients. The chef's specialty of Latin and Caribbean dishes contributes to his brand, and stems from simple beginnings.

Having grown up in Puerto Limón, Costa Rica, Taylor attributes his culinary knowledge to cooking with his grandmother and the Jamaican community of his hometown. With an 11-person household, Taylor's grandmother made sure to always have food on the family's table.

"I would be at her skirt tails. I learned at an early age that if you hang out in the kitchen with grandma, grandma's going to feed you," Taylor told the Business Journal.

In remembering the herbs and spices she used in her recipes, along with other homemade ingredients, Taylor was able to put everything together when developing Tico Rico's sauces. The



Richard Taylor  
Owner, Chef  
Tico Rico

name Tico Rico borrows from the Costa Rican peoples' nickname "Tico" and Taylor's own name in Spanish.

### Culinary Career

Landing in Chicago after high school, Taylor had moved into a role at a manufacturer as the middleman between the labor force's Latin and African American population and upper management. The firm offered Taylor a more lucrative deal to stay on after changing partners, but he decided to turn it down.

However, the company then offered to pay for further education, and Taylor convinced the team to let him attend culinary school. After two years, Taylor had an associate degree from **College of DuPage** in Illinois and a more refined repertoire.

The original hot sauce was born during his time as an executive chef at a Chicago golf club.



Original, Serrano  
Lime and the Trio

He remembers a group of regulars coming in and demanding a spicier option than the condiments available. Inspired by his grandmother, Taylor decided to cook his own sauce for the next time the guests came in.

"I brought some habaneros in one day, threw them in the blender, and later heard yells from the table," Taylor said. Once Taylor presented the sauce and received demands for where it came from, he realized the potential of developing his own sauce.

### Trio of Sauces

Taylor moved to San Clemente in 2016 and spent his free time developing a second sauce.

His wife, **Karen**, during a taste test had suggested adding lime to the serrano mixture. Unsure, Taylor added a single lime to his next batch and now credits his wife as the catalyst for his second creation, called Serrano Lime.

The specialty Tico Rico Trio was introduced after a stream of requests for an even hotter sauce. Taylor turned to the hottest peppers in the world, the Carolina Reaper and the ghost pepper, and began his own garden due to its high prices. Come harvest, he can make about

250 bottles.

All are made in a commercial kitchen in Oceanside, and batches of the Original, Serrano Lime and the Trio is available until sold out. Taylor hopes to partner with a local grower in the future to keep the trio year-round.

Individual bottles range from \$6 to \$7.99. There are no preservatives, less salt, and each serving has 5 calories for a more natural product, the company says.

### Online Focus

A week prior to the pandemic, Taylor had quit his local chef job to focus on the hot sauces full time. He had only begun selling at a nearby street fair in Oceanside in 2019. With the shutdown, he rushed to debut the business website and started selling online mid-2020.

"It's made from the soul. It's a passion. I wholeheartedly believe in the product itself, and the pure nature of it," Taylor said.

While noting the difficulty of breaking into OC's competitive food market, Taylor is focused on developing his online clientele that has grown steadily in the past two years. "That's how I know it's only going to go up." ■

### Tico Rico



- **FOUNDED:** 2016
- **FOUNDER/CEO:** Rich Taylor
- **HEADQUARTERS:** San Clemente
- **BUSINESS:** hot sauces
- **NOTABLE:** chef sells Costa Rican hot sauces online and at market in Oceanside

# Medify Lightens Up Brain Health

## DEVICE MAKERS: Startup gains backing from Kaiser unit, FDA

■ By AUDREY KEMP

Light therapy could soon become a treatment option for depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions, according to the execs running San Clemente medtech startup **Medify Inc.**

Founded in 2020 by medical device veteran **Ray Harrington**, Medify is developing at-home, wearable products powered by photobiomodulation (PBM), or infrared therapy that stimulates cells in the brain, which in turn increases mental acuity and lowers stress levels, according to the company.

"Studies have shown increased blood flow to the brain can elevate mood and cognition," Harrington said.

"We're extremely excited about our technology's potential to help many."

In January, Medify's pilot product, the **Titan-IR** headset, became the first **FDA** class II device that uses PBM for the "maintenance and management" of brain health, representing a "huge milestone" for the company, officials said.

Medify reported selling out of units during a preorder sale last November; its clients comprised behavioral and mental health clinics across six states.



Ray Harrington  
Founder, CEO  
Medify



Medify's Titan-IR: a wearable headset that uses infrared light therapy to promote brain health

### New Investor

Portland, Ore.-based **Kaiser Northwest Permanente** recently became Medify's first major partner; the organization is putting a "substantial amount" towards a clinical study examining the device's potential to treat depression and anxiety, Harrington said.

"Kaiser Northwest Permanente is at the forefront, if not the leader, for this technology," he added. "To have a multibillion-dollar entity that understands what we're doing, and be willing to partner with us, shows a huge commitment on their part."

Expected to have some 150 participants, the Kaiser-backed study will be among the largest for wearable medical devices, and the largest-ever study for PBM.

In addition, Medify's goal is to create a combination product with a diagnostic and treatment aspect, with the help of a seed investor.

"We've self-funded through the entire process, so we're looking for a seed partner to understand our vision," Harrington said.

The company is planning to move its headquarters to Irvine due to its proximity to the

medical device space and access to capital, he said.

### Instrumental Steps

Harrington entered the medical device industry in the early 2000s. Working for a number of small and large companies. He oversaw the development of several new technologies, including **Johnson & Johnson's** Ethicon endosurgery, **Acclarent's** balloon sinuplasty, and **Xoft's** electronic brachytherapy.

"Looking back, you realize how instrumental every step was," he said. "I always knew the startup world was for me."

Most recently, Harrington served as director of business development for **Neuronetics Inc.** (Nasdaq: STIM), the first medical device company to treat mental health. Neuronetics, valued around \$85 million, pioneered a non-invasive treatment known as transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) to treat major depressive disorder.

It had a "very unique basis" on his current work at Medify, he said.

Neuronetics developed the first FDA-approved transcranial magnetic therapies to treat major depressive disorder.

Medify's technology "takes what Neuronetics did and makes it wearable, so people can treat their symptoms on their own time and not in several sessions at a medical practice," Harrington told the Business Journal late last year.

### Future Initiatives

By the second quarter of 2022, Medify aims to officially launch the Titan-IR to consumers, clinicians and physicians.

In conjunction, Medify will release the first

### Medify Inc.



- **FOUNDED:** 2020
- **CEO:** Ray Harrington
- **HEADQUARTERS:** San Clemente; will relocate to Irvine
- **BUSINESS:** photobiomodulation devices to treat brain health
- **EMPLOYEES:** 10
- **NOTABLE:** developed first FDA class II medical device that treats brain health with photobiomodulation

fully customizable, multi-wavelength PBM mobile app. Connecting to the Titan via Bluetooth, the app will deliver six settings that promote brain wave activity, from low-frequency Delta waves, to high-frequency Gamma waves, Harrington said.

The company recommends several 15-minute sessions per week for the first few weeks of treatment.

"That will help increase your brain's blood flow over a period of time," and eventually improve mood and cognition, Harrington said.

Further down the line, once the Kaiser clinical study for depression and anxiety is complete, Medify hopes to examine the Titan-IR in treatment settings for post-traumatic stress disorder.

"Once we get tangible information, that will furthermore increase our addressable market by tenfold overnight," Harrington said, adding that the technology's global addressable market could range between \$74 billion and \$75 billion.

"Perhaps it's even more." ■

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Yorba Linda Palms, a 44-unit addition to portfolio this month, company reports



Grove Senior Apartments buy in late 2020 was first local acquisition for company

# Avanath Adds to Apartment Portfolio; ESG Focus



**Daryl Carter**  
Founder, CEO, Chairman  
Avanath Capital

## REAL ESTATE: Yorba Linda, Costa Mesa additions

■ By MARK MUELLER

It's been another year of dealmaking for **Daryl Carter**, founder, chairman and CEO of Irvine's **Avanath Capital Management LLC**, one of the larger apartment owners based in OC, and one of country's largest proponents of investing in economically disadvantaged communities.

A year ago, it counted a portfolio of about 80 properties with 12,000 units, including 1,500 apartments added in 2020.

The firm—which acquires and operates affordable, age-restricted and workforce housing on behalf of institutional investors—now has a much larger portfolio, one approaching 100 communities with 13,500 units spread among 53 cities.

That growth should push the company to near the largest 20 of the country's largest affordable housing owners, according to multifamily industry data.

The company says it has more than \$2.6 billion in assets under management.

### Investor Interest

Thank the unprecedented influx of investor money pouring into the industry for helping fund Avanath's recent growth, according to Carter, who has been in the apartment sector for over 40 years.

Domestic and foreign investors "continue to invest in all segments of the multifamily industry, with the greatest focus on two sectors—affordable housing and single-family rentals," Carter said in a recent company newsletter.

"This will continue to fuel the growth of Avanath's affordable preservation business."

### National, Local Buys

A notable recent addition to the firm's holdings was Washington, D.C.'s **2M Street** apart-

ments, an affordable housing complex about 12 blocks from the Capitol; it paid a reported \$103.5 million for the site near the end of the year.

Closer to home, this month it reported buying **Yorba Linda Palms**, a 44-unit complex along Yorba Linda Boulevard, next to Imperial Highway. Terms of the purchase were not immediately disclosed.

The Yorba Linda Palms buy comes three months after Avanath paid \$11.8 million for **St. John's Manor**, a 36-unit complex in East Side Costa Mesa.

Also late last year, Avanath paid a reported \$65 million for Corona's **River Run Senior**, a 360-unit affordable seniors housing community just north of the 91 (Riverside) Freeway, along River Road.

The Corona complex traded hands for about \$180,000 a unit. River Run Senior is about 3 miles from Orange County.

Avanath now owns 13 properties in Southern California with over 2,200 units under management in the region.

River Run is the company's second acquisition in Riverside County, and first since 2014.

The investor's also been extremely active in Orange County of late, with a quartet of acquisitions over the past two and half years. Other recent local buys included the **Overlook at Anaheim Hills**, an \$87.5 million deal inked in mid-2021. That complex, also close to the 91 Freeway, is about a dozen miles west of River Run. It sold for about \$335,000 per unit.

Near the start of 2021, it made its first OC acquisition, paying \$19.9 million, or about \$234,000 per unit, for **The Grove Senior Apartments**, an 85-unit independent living community in Garden Grove.

Overlook: Anaheim Hills complex bought in 2021 for \$87.5M



### Gateway Opportunities

While the multifamily market at large has been on fire of late, there's also been a recent growth of multifamily investment in non-gateway markets, Carter noted in the company's latest quarterly newsletter.

"Working from home is shifting the demographic landscape of America. While cities like New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and San Francisco will continue to be the major focus of investors and developers, other cities are becoming more attractive because they are affordable and have progressive development policy," he told investors.

"Two cities I am bullish on are Detroit and El Paso," he said. "Detroit and El Paso are border cities and major distribution hubs. We are breaking ground on a development property in Detroit next spring that will have a cost basis that is 35% of new construction in coastal cities."

### ESG Honors

What to watch for the apartment sector in 2022?

ESG—short for Environmental, Social, and Governance—will continue to grow in importance in the multifamily industry, according to Carter.

"Avanath's mission has put much emphasis on the 'S'—social impacts—in many of the services we provide our residents, including wellness, after school programs, and financial literacy," he wrote recently.

Now, he says, the company is "putting more emphasis on the 'E'—clean energy and water preservation. We see many credible options/strategies for greater solar power usage. These strategies are certainly important to multifamily investors, but increasingly important to our residents."

**Avanath Capital Management LLC**

avanath+

■ **FOUNDED:** 2007

■ **CHAIRMAN/CEO:** Daryl Carter

■ **HEADQUARTERS:** Irvine

■ **BUSINESS:** owns affordable, workforce apartment communities

■ **PORTFOLIO:** topping 13,500 units

■ **NOTABLE:** new Yorba Linda, Costa Mesa additions to portfolio

To that end, early this month Avanath announced that it had become one of the first affordable housing owners to achieve the "Well Health-Safety Rating" across its portfolio.

The recognition, made via the **International Well Building Institute**, comes a year after Avanath launched an ESG platform, dubbed **Amplify**, to extend its "authentic social commitments and programs, building an environmental, social and governance program."

"The health and safety of our residents is a top priority for us and one of the major reasons we decided to roll this initiative out portfolio-wide," said **David Natt**, senior vice president of Asset Management at Avanath.

"We've always placed a focus on health, even prior to the pandemic."

The company notes that in 2019, it began to convert underutilized spaces in some senior communities into wellness facilities with screening rooms that have exam tables, medical supplies and medical exam equipment.

It also started to provide residents with free cholesterol checks, flu vaccines, health and wellness classes and fitness classes, among other programs. ■



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Source: Diverse: Issues in Higher Education (Oct. 2021)



**IT TAKES A TITAN**  
THE CAMPAIGN FOR CAL STATE FULLERTON

# Right Choice Makes Healthy Living Accessible at Home

## SMALL BUSINESS: Serving OC and beyond, virtually

■ By KAITLIN AQUINO

**Right Choice Fitness LLC** is helping Orange County residents begin their fitness journeys from the comfort of their own homes.

The company, founded in 2007 by CEO **Karen Mizell**, provides quick, virtual 30-minute workout programs for busy fitness beginners looking for a healthy lifestyle change. Its current regimens focus on boxing, strength training and Tabata training. Classes are held via Zoom.

"To exercise, many go to work all day, head to the gym and then fight the traffic when coming home. All of that takes time away from your family," Mizell told the Business Journal. "With Right Choice Fitness, at least that commute time to the gym and home will be eliminated."

A certified nutritionist, Mizell also provides healthy eating advice to her clients while being flexible with their diets.

"I don't tell my clients what to eat. I find out what they are eating and how they are eating. Then I make recommendations." Like substituting sweet tea for lemon water, she said.

With Right Choice Fitness programming, Mizell has helped one of her clients lose over 100 pounds in less than two years.

### Life Enjoyment

Many of Mizell's clients range from their 40s to their 70s and aren't focused on losing weight. Most of them are looking to reduce the pain they endure when engaging in physical activity.

"I want my clients to be able to go on walks



**Karen Mizell**  
CEO  
Right Choice Fitness

and not hurt. I want them to be able to enjoy their families and their grandkids, not just sit there and watch them but be a part of their life," Mizell said.

Revenue for Right Choice Fitness in 2021 was \$45,000, down from \$52,000 the year prior. Mizell attributes the dip in revenue to clients missing more classes as people returned from remote working and took vacations as pandemic restrictions grew more lenient.

Mizell currently serves clients in Irvine, Tustin, Aliso Viejo and Newport Beach. But after pivoting to an online format following the onset of the pandemic, she said she is open to serving clients beyond Orange County.

### One-Woman Show

Mizell has led Right Choice Fitness as a one-



Mizell, a certified group and personal trainer, taught in-person classes before the pandemic

woman show for 14 years, and has no plans to operate otherwise.

When she first started teaching classes for Right Choice Fitness as a certified personal trainer, Mizell's only clients were her friends.

But by word of mouth, Mizell's client base quickly grew beyond her social circle. At one point, she had the **Integrative Medical Group** of Irvine by Dr. **Felice Gersh** recommending her as a personal trainer to its patients.

"Instead of me searching for people, people were now searching for me."

### From Corporate to Fitness

Mizell moved to Orange County as a single mom of two daughters in 1990, after the parent company of **Kodak**, where she worked as a

contract administrator, relocated from Simi Valley. Before moving to California, Mizell lived and grew up in West Virginia.

Mizell has been active all her life. She grew up playing football, kickball and dodgeball with the kids in her neighborhood and her four brothers. Never did she think of working as a fitness instructor until Kodak told her she had to make a choice: lose her job or relocate to Rochester, N.Y. to stay with the company.

In her distaste for cold weather, Mizell decided on the former, which marked the start of her journey as a trainer and small business owner in the fitness industry.

Beyond leading Right Choice Fitness, Mizell, an Irvine resident, has worked as a trainer at the **Edwards Lifesciences Inc.** campus gym, and the **YMCA** in Newport Beach. She's also a Zumba instructor for **Soka University**. She enjoys leading movement warmups at her local church, **Christ Our Redeemer** in Irvine, and spending time with her seven grandkids. ■

### Right Choice Fitness LLC

- **FOUNDED:** 2007
- **CEO:** Karen Mizell
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Irvine
- **BUSINESS:** fitness instruction and advising
- **NOTABLE:** provides certified personal training and nutritional advice virtually

## Naturade

► from page 32

ting our social mission."

### Orgain Sale

It's a good time to be a nutrition-focused food business in Orange County.

Earlier this month, **Nestlé Health Science** announced a deal to buy a majority stake in Irvine's **Orgain**, which describes itself as the leading plant-based protein powder and leading organic nutritional protein ready-to-drink shake in the U.S.

Terms of the deal were undisclosed; reports from last year placed a \$2 billion valuation on Orgain, which is backed by L.A.-based **Butterfly Equity**, a private equity firm spe-

cializing in the food sector.

Butterfly's website indicated Orgain's sales top \$300 million annually.

### Green on the Screen

Tellis is expecting more publicity for his company and products later this year, via the anticipated launch of **They're Trying to Kill Us**, a feature-length sequel to the award-winning film **What the Health**. It features hip-hop artists **Jay-Z**, **Waka Flocka**, and **Public Enemy**.

VeganSmart co-founder **John Lewis**, also known as **Bad Ass Vegan**, appears in the film and talks about Naturade. The Naturade team hopes the film debuts this month.

"We want to be on the airwaves, pushing healthy eating, and making it cool to the kids," he said. "We want to help facilitate cleaner eating and a cleaner planet." ■



Tellis at Business Journal's Innovator of the Year Awards in September 2021

## How To Reach Us

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Orange County Business Journal,  
18500 Von Karman Ave., Suite 150  
Irvine, CA 92612  
(949) 833-8373; fax (949) 833-8751



# Acknowledging and Appreciating Black Chamber Business Diamonds

Reflecting on the main ingredients, which has kept the Orange County Black Chamber of Commerce on a successful path these 38 years, our relationships and partnerships are at the pinnacle of the list.

**This Black History Month we are extremely proud to recognize a few Diamonds in our business community.**

- Orange County Diverse Business Leaders Coalition.
- Davina Samuel, Vice President Union Bank;
- Tammy Tumbling, Executive Vice President, COO, Orange County Community Foundation, Founder African American Alliance Fund;
- Dr. Dawn Pearson Director, (C-REAL), Center for Research on Educational Access and Leadership;
- Ian O. Williamson, Vice Chancellor, UCI Dean of Paul Merage School of Business;
- Julian Purdy, US Dept. of Labor, Chief of Staff, Veterans Employment & Training Service;
- Samuel Johnson, CEO Transportation Corridor Agencies;
- William N. Byers, Jr., CEO, Explorer Studios; and the

These Diamonds are the epitome of positive motivation and embody professionalism and dedication to our Orange County Communities. We proudly acknowledge and appreciate their dependable dedication.

The Black Chambers ability to work within the vast business community has

opened up opportunities, dialogue and new arenas to improve our business acumen regarding diversity, relationship building, entrepreneurship, economic development and review constantly those ancillary areas like cultural changes, health and wellness issues.



**Bobby McDonald**

Over the years, the Black Chamber has embraced diversity and encouraged our members to broaden potential networking circles. The chamber also took a business leadership role to ensure that veterans are aware of career technical education, workforce education and workforce development opportunities.

We worked tirelessly with community partners, like the Orange County Diverse Business Leaders Coalition, to encourage underserved youths to stay in school, obtain a college degree and receive valuable mentoring in this competitive, technologically demanding workforce.

As we work through these extraordinary times, we continue to offer webinars and programs featuring supplier diversity, business development, financial literacy and educational opportunities with our business partners.

We at the Black Chamber are always looking for ways to help you improve, enhance and grow your business—with Access to Information.

For more information, please contact Bobby McDonald at [bobby.mcdonald@ocblackchamber.com](mailto:bobby.mcdonald@ocblackchamber.com) or visit us at [www.ocblackchamber.com](http://www.ocblackchamber.com).

## BLACK CHAMBER RECOGNIZES THESE DIAMONDS IN THE COMMUNITY....



**Orange County Diverse Business Leaders Coalition**



**Davina Samuel**



**Tammy Tumbling**



**Dr. Dawn Pearson**



**Ian O. Williamson**



**Julian Purdy**



**Samuel Johnson**



**William N. Byers, Jr.**



Lugano Diamonds Presents

# THE ETERNAL BRILLIANCE OF DIAMONDS

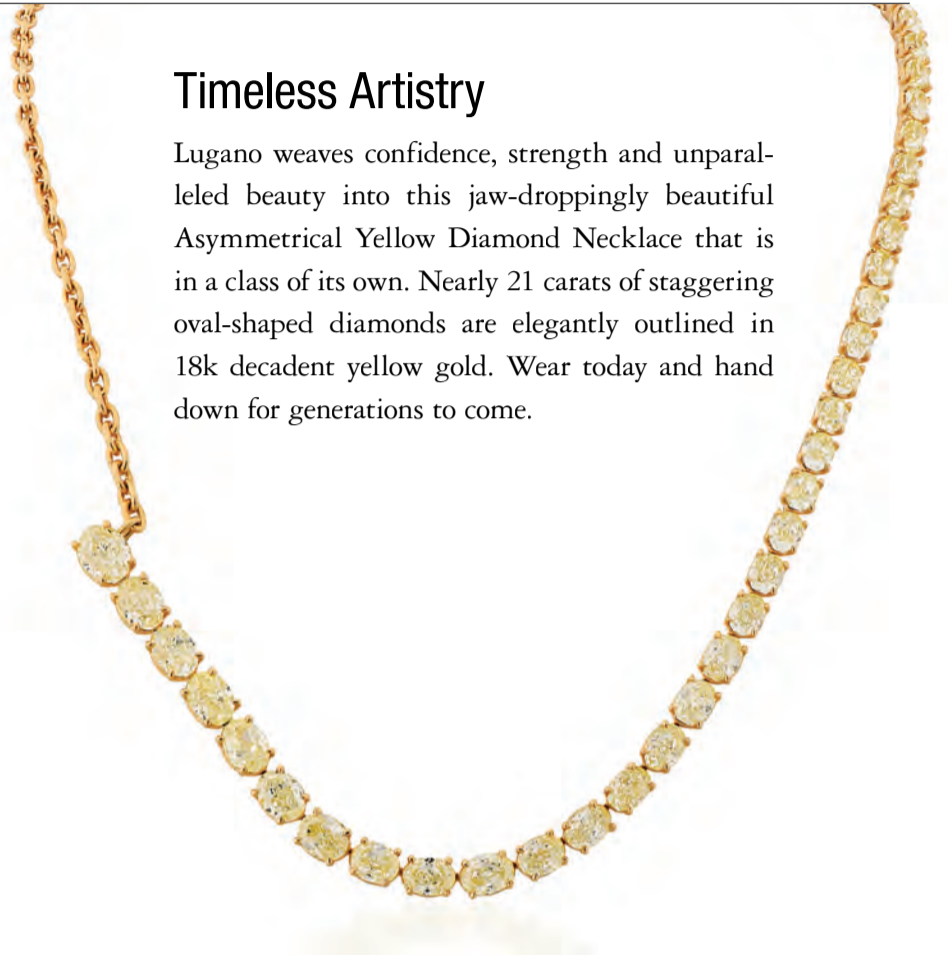
What woman doesn't love diamonds? Among the prettiest stones on Earth, diamonds are a distinctive and unforgettable addition to any woman's collection.

*"Our clients are discerning and seek stand-out wearable works of art,"* said Moti Ferder, design director and CEO of Lugano Diamonds. *"We design to inspire with the rarest and most extraordinary pieces of bespoke jewelry."*

A piece of jewelry by Lugano Diamonds begins with a remarkable gemstone unique unto itself. Each statement-making design frames the beauty of the gemstone to create a captivating masterpiece that demands attention – jewelry that matches your lifestyle from casual luxury to elegant subtlety. Visit a Lugano Diamonds Salon to see more of our classic diamond pieces.

## Timeless Artistry

Lugano weaves confidence, strength and unparalleled beauty into this jaw-droppingly beautiful Asymmetrical Yellow Diamond Necklace that is in a class of its own. Nearly 21 carats of staggering oval-shaped diamonds are elegantly outlined in 18k decadent yellow gold. Wear today and hand down for generations to come.



## Passionate Sparkle

Elegant and sophisticated, Lugano's Yellow Cushion Hoop Earrings shimmer with nearly 21 carats of cushion cut yellow diamonds encased in lustrous 18k yellow gold.



## Eternal Brilliance

This dazzling Oval Cut Diamond Center Ring showcases the creativity for which Lugano is known. A stunning 14-carat yellow-green oval diamond is flanked by two pear-shaped orange-yellow diamonds weighing in at more than two-and-a-half carats. Set in classic 18k yellow gold, the ring – both timeless and contemporary – adds the perfect touch of sparkle for celebrating a special occasion or just because.



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DIAMONDS

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View our stunning collection at the Lugano Diamonds Grand Salon located at 620 Newport Center Drive, Suite 100, Newport Beach.  
Please call 949.720.1258 and schedule your appointment, or visit our additional locations in Aspen, Palm Beach, and Ocala.





## What Are the Signs of a University on the Rise?

Multiple research metrics help Chapman chart its upward trajectory, but the focus remains on the people driving global impact.

### Chapman Achieves National and International Stature

Chapman continues its transformation from a highly regarded regional university to one with a national and even international footprint. Multiple metrics point to a university on the rise.

As **Chapman's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts has climbed to No. 4 in the nation**, passing legacy schools in two high-profile rankings, the overall university has enjoyed three straight years of upward movement since being **elevated into U.S. News & World Report's top national rankings category**.

And now Chapman has been included in the latest edition of the U.S. News "Best Global Universities" ranking.

Global recognition is largely due to faculty researchers producing impactful work – more than 1,250 core collection publications from 2015 to 2019 alone. In this metric, Chapman is outperforming a large number of peer institutions. Notable also in Chapman's inclusion in the global rankings is the sharp growth curve of publications and citations.

Additionally, in a database of more than 100,000 top scientists based on their research citations, 16 Chapman professors rank among the top 2% for the volume and impact of their research.

The list of Chapman top producers is impressive by any measure. The group includes:

- Nobel Prize-winning economist **Vernon Smith, Ph.D.**, who helped found the Economic Science Institute at Chapman. Smith, Ph.D., was awarded the Nobel in Economic Sciences in 2002 and has authored or co-authored more than 350 articles and books on capital theory, finance, natural resource economics and experimental economics.
- Professor of Psychology **Laura Glynn, Ph.D.**, who for 20 years has helped lead a longitudinal study on child development and maternal mental health. She's currently part of a multi-university project that has received a five-year, \$15 million grant from the National Institute of Mental Health and uses cutting-edge neuroimaging and other data to study the effects of exposure to long-term or chronic stress.
- National Medal of Science winner **Yakir Aharonov, Ph.D.**, who has discovered dozens of fundamental physics effects, changing the quantum landscape and drawing comparisons to Copernicus and Galileo from colleagues inspired by his breakthrough ideas.

Another name on the list of top producers: **Chapman President Daniele C. Struppa**, an internationally recognized mathematician.

"When your president has authored more than 200 publications, has won the Cozzarelli Prize from the National Academy of Sciences and continues to do important research, it sets a high standard for the university," says Norma Boucnahrd, Ph.D., Chapman's provost.

For his part, Struppa says that Chapman's institutional focus on research "is not because of pride or prestige but because of the experience we can offer our students and the overall impact we can have on the world."

He envisioned that impact when he set institutional goals during his first year as president in 2016. One was to establish an Office of Research to help provide the funding support for projects, and that office was launched in Struppa's inaugural year.

Expenditures have now risen every year since 2012, reflecting Chapman's research achievements.



### Rinker Campus and Keck Center Highlight Cutting-Edge Facilities

Then there are the upgrades in infrastructure, which include state-of-the-art core lab facilities at Chapman's Rinker Health Science Campus in Irvine as well as the **140,000-square-foot Keck Center for Science and Engineering** on the main campus in Orange.

Of course, a key milestone was achieving R2 status from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, for "high research activity." That recognition puts Chapman in the company of just 10% of private colleges and universities.

A particularly important measure of Chapman's success is its growing number of citations, Struppa said. He points to the progress made over the past two decades. In 2000, work produced by Chapman faculty was cited 100 times.

"In 2020, we were up to 9,455 citations, which means that 26 times a day, someone was citing the work of our scholars. That upward trajectory shows that not only do our faculty publish a lot, but people pay attention to the work we're doing."

Yes, people are noticing, and eager to get involved. Among them:

- **Biomed researcher Rachita Sumbria, Ph.D.**, who joined Chapman in February with three National Institutes of Health R01 grants supporting her efforts to learn more about microscopic hemorrhages in the brain.
- **Physicist Andrew Jordan, Ph.D.**, recognized internationally for his work in theoretical and condensed matter physics as well as quantum optics, and who in 2021 became co-director of Chapman's Institute for Quantum Studies.
- **Educational Studies Professor Stephany Cuevas, Ph.D.**, who joined Chapman this academic year and whose immersive research for her doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education has led to her new book about how Latinx parents build supportive communities to help their children succeed in college.

"These impressive faculty members are examples of how we are able to attract some of the very best scholars and researchers in the nation," Struppa said.

Even for a newcomer, the energy is palpable, Boucnahrd said.

"It seems to be in the DNA of Chapman to rise," she noted. "We're excited by all the opportunities we have to continue our momentum."

To learn more, visit **Chapman.edu/momentum**



# From Humble Beginnings: Black CEO Leads OC Nonprofit Dedicated To Ending Poverty

Growing up in poverty in Paterson, New Jersey shaped Gregory C. Scott as a leader. Today, it fuels his bold mission to end the cycle of poverty in his role as CEO of Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC).

Orange County is known for its affluence, but in Gregory's travels he has recognized that many don't know it is also home to some of the poorest areas in the state. Hidden in cities surrounded by vast wealth, our hardworking neighbors are fighting to keep up with inflation, battling with very intimate health and wellness battles and struggling to keep food on the table—and they need CAP OC's help as part of their dream for a better future.

Born out of the "War on Poverty" more than 50 years ago, CAP OC has been a trusted resource for helping individuals and families find their way out of poverty. A catalyst for helping grow vibrant communities by stabilizing and empowering people with the resources they need, when they need them, through crisis intervention and a variety of wraparound services.

### Empowering and Uplifting the Future

Under Gregory's guidance, CAP OC's clients' needs are being met and they are thriving! CAP OC is focused on the future, advancing youth empowerment and leadership



Gregory C. Scott

through various programs and services, and building upon CAP OC's core strengths. Gregory is hyper-focused on workforce development, financial empowerment, civic engagement, entrepreneurship and advocating for affordable housing. The future of Orange County rests on the shoulders of our younger generations and CAP OC is doing everything it can to advocate and invest in these communities.

Gregory's dedicated leadership team is focused on enhancing fundraising, increasing board education, elevating marketing initiatives, maintaining reliable, updated internal data systems and information technology and continuing to strengthen Diversity Equity and Inclusion work. But it's important to not just talk the talk—Gregory is walking the walk to end poverty within his own organization by steadfastly expanding CAP OC's capacity to ensure current and future employees are paid a California living wage, so that they can live and not just survive in Orange County.

Dedicated to pursuing inclusion on every level—from the nonprofit's internal workforce to the families served—CAP OC is ensuring all voices are valued and heard by embracing the respect, dignity and equity of every human being. With Gregory at the helm, CAP OC remains committed to building and uplifting communities by addressing the root causes of poverty through systemic reforms, social, economic, and racial justice for all.



## MOVING FORWARD **TOGETHER**

Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAP OC) welcomes and celebrates our diverse communities. We pursue inclusion across all life experiences for our workforce and the families we serve, ensuring all voices are valued and heard. We embrace respect, dignity, and equity of every human being as we remain committed to building and empowering communities by addressing the root causes of poverty through systemic reforms, social, environmental and racial justice for all.

THIS IS WHERE **POVERTY ENDS**





What does it take to support Black business in Orange County?

# IT TAKES A TITAN

## Supporting Black Business Starts with Education

Cal State Fullerton believes that supporting Black business starts with education.

The learning environment at CSUF empowers Titan students—the future workers and leaders of Orange County—to achieve the fullness of their potential while uplifting others along the way.

Resources such as the African American Resource Center, Male Success Initiative-Fullerton and Institute of Black Intellectual Innovation, among others, support Black culture, creative arts and intellectual history for both the campus and Southern California region.

They also provide students of color with mentorship and opportunities for research and engagement within the local community, empowering students to succeed academically and graduate—ready for the careers of tomorrow.

Cal State Fullerton ranks No. 1 in California and No. 3 in the nation for awarding bachelor's degrees to underrepresented students, according to Diverse: Issues in Higher Education's "Top 100 Degree Producers" list, published in October 2021.

Titan alumnus Bobby McDonald '75 (B.S. physical education) makes an even more direct impact on Black business in Orange County.

McDonald is the founder, president and CEO of the Black Chamber of Commerce of Orange County, and has spent more than 30 years collaborating with minority business associations, chambers and legislators to support and advocate for local small businesses.

Recently, in light of the social unrest in 2020, McDonald partnered with his alma mater and the Orange County Business Council to create the OC Racial Equity & Inclusion Action Committee to "elevate the conversation about racial justice in Orange County and create a framework for public and private businesses to

Titan alumnus  
Bobby McDonald '75  
(B.S. physical education)



implement meaningful practices that lead to safe, equitable, and inclusive organizations that positively impact the Orange County community."

Cal State Fullerton is proud to be part of the fabric of Orange County, supporting Black business and making our region an extraordinary place to live, work and do business.



## RSM Marks its ESG Journey

At RSM US LLP (RSM), fostering strong social connections has been integral to our culture, whose deep ties to the 88 communities our nearly 14,000 professionals serve across the U.S. and in Canada, including here in Orange County, date back to its founding as a small Midwestern firm nearly a century ago.

Today, against the backdrop of heightened awareness around racial and gender equity, income inequality, the environment and other growing social issues, the firm is taking steps to drive change, including putting a growing emphasis on environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives and developing the means to track progress within the firm. RSM published its first diversity report in 2021. The most recent version of the report can be found on the firm's website ([www.rsmus.com](http://www.rsmus.com)).

### Opportunity abounds for firms that can adapt to shifting priorities

The growing importance of environmental, social and governance issues has reached an inflection point for middle market businesses, even in the face of the dramatic economic fluctuations of the last year-and-a-half, according to proprietary research from RSM, which is summarized in its Middle Market Business Index special ESG report.

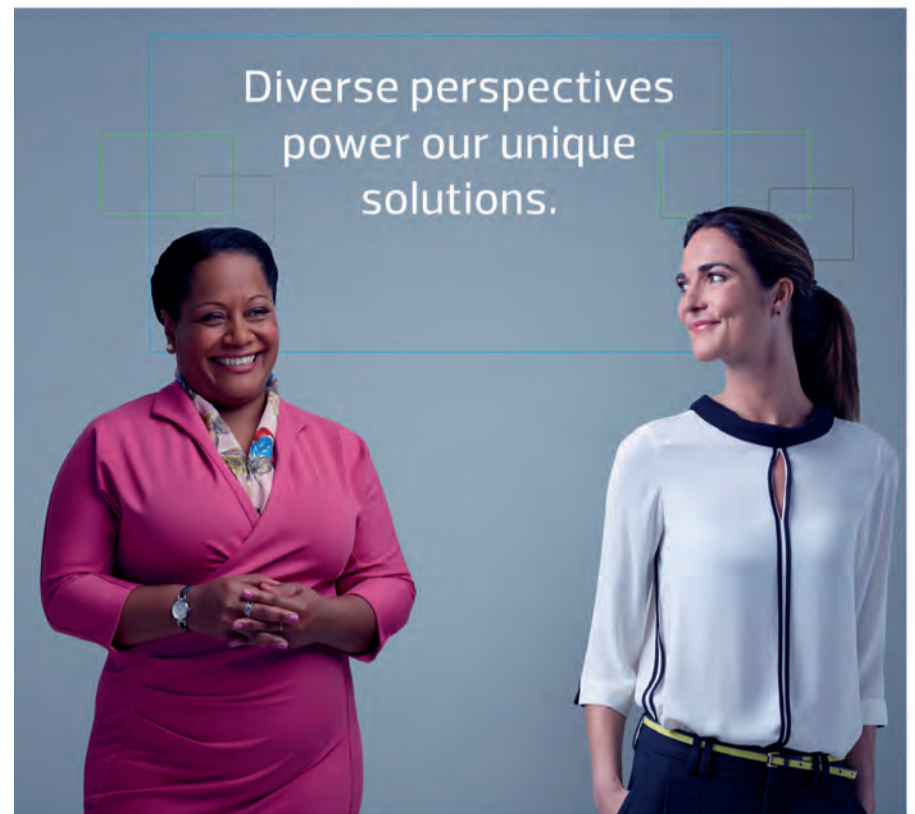
Stakeholders' increased focus on ESG will continue to present immense business opportunities for organizations that position themselves to adapt to these shifting priorities.

Familiarity among middle market executives with the use of ESG criteria to evaluate the performance of businesses, organizations and/or investments rose significantly in the third quarter of 2021, compared to the fourth quarter in 2019, according to the third-quarter RSM US Middle Market Business Index survey, which polled executives from July 8, 2021 through July 26, 2021 on ESG- and climate change-related questions.

And the rise of ESG is about more than just awareness—a majority of survey respondents indicated that their organizations are taking action to incorporate these issues into their operations.

As gender equity, climate, racial equality, income disparity and other social issues gain national prominence, the role of corporations around social imperatives has come to the fore. It's not surprising that middle market businesses have now elevated ESG measures as a business priority.

The report provides insights into how middle market businesses are reacting to heightened awareness around ESG and climate-related issues. We encourage you to visit [rsmus.com](http://rsmus.com) and read our full Environmental, Social and Governance special report.



Our diverse, inclusive teams develop unique insights tailored to your growing business. The experiences that make each of us uncommon will set you apart, too.

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Find out more at [rsmus.com](http://rsmus.com)

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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HADDAD**

Founder and Chairman  
Emeritus,  
FivePoint Holdings, LLC

**FIVE POINT**



# REGISTER TODAY

New Event Date: May 26, 2022

**Luncheon & Awards Program**

May 26, 2022

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

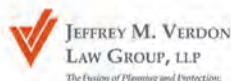
Tickets\*: \$175 / Table of Ten: \$1650



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\*Tickets are non-refundable. Ticket price includes a six-month subscription to the Orange County Business Journal (\$15 allocated to the subscription). New subscribers only. Current subscribers may gift the subscription to a colleague.