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# BREAKTHROUGH BREAKTHROUGH

MEET THE FOUNDERS



# NICOLE DEGGINS

## SISTA MIDWIFE PRODUCTIONS

Trainer, public speaker, and educator, Nicole Deggins, is one of the country's leading birth advocacy experts working to eliminate perinatal disparities and bring transparency to prenatal education with over 30 years of experience in her field. Named "The Midwife Shifting the Narrative" by ESSENCE Magazine, Deggins is the founder and CEO of Sista Midwife Production and the creator of the largest online directory, Black Midwife and Doula. Through webinars, keynotes, live workshops, and events. Nicole creates enlightening and engaging programs to train and support birth workers, communities, and organizations that work with childbearing families through webinars, keynotes, live workshops, and events.

### ABOUT NICOLE

#### CONNECT

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# DANIELA CAPISTRANO

## DCAP MEDIA

Futurist, storyteller, and digital marketing strategist Daniela Capistrano (She/They) founded DCAP Media LLC for forward-thinking media companies, startups, nonprofits, academic institutions, and individual brands that prioritize strategic experimentation. As a Certified LGBTBE® Enterprise, Capistrano is also a part of the 2022 Goldman Sachs 10K Small Business program (cohort 30). As she makes waves through her work, she looks forward to launching a business podcast later this year.



### ABOUT DANIELA

#### CONNECT

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# JOEL DYSON

## BEYOND THE STAGE

What initially began as a hobby in her father's church at just four years old has since transformed both Joel Dyson's professional career and personal life. A force on and off the stage, Dyson, founder and CEO of Beyond the Stage, LLC, grew up in the New Orleans music scene, deeply inspired by its rich history and jazz culture. With an undergrad degree from Eastman School of Music, Dyson is leveraging her experience, education, and innate passion for creating a safe and fun environment for aspiring youth to explore the creative and performing arts. She is currently pursuing her MBA at Louisiana State University Shreveport.

### ABOUT JOEL

#### CONNECT

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# ARIELLE BROWN

## BEA'S BAYOU SKINCARE

With a degree in Social Work from Southern University New Orleans and over five years of experience conducting trauma-focused therapies, Arielle Brown's career took a turn from education to entrepreneurship in 2020. While quarantined during COVID, she experimented with scalp drops to help soothe her Seborrheic dermatitis flare-ups. What began as a simple remedy quickly evolved into a whole suite of products, which she launched as Bea's Bayou. Named after her maternal grandmother, Beatrice, Brown has completed various entrepreneurship programs, including Amazon's First Black Business Accelerator, amongst other accolades.



### ABOUT ARIELLE

#### CONNECT

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# COURTNEY MCWILLIAMS

## MARYMAC'S DOGGIE RETREAT

With a background in social work and an affinity for canines, Courtney D. McWilliams founded MaryMac's Doggie Retreat, the first black-owned, New Orleans-based doggie daycare and spa boutique, in 2015 when she struggled to find a pet sitter for her own dog who understood how to navigate its severe separation anxiety. Today, MaryMac's Doggie Retreat serves local dog owners whose furry friends experience anxiety and depression, providing tips for proper care in a safe, comfortable environment for their pets while they're away.



### ABOUT COURTNEY

#### CONNECT

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# TIFFANY BROWN

## WICKS NOLA CANDLE COMPANY

Named as one of Oprah Magazine's 22 Best Scented Candles, Wicks NOLA Candle Company was birthed from a family legacy. The memories she shared with her late father and her New Orleans heritage inspired Tiffany to trace each scent to a familiar and memorable experience as a homage to her origins. From riding streetcars between the Garden District and Treme to exploring the notable Creole cuisine, Brown infuses these NOLA cultural favorites into her candle line to evoke that same sense of nostalgia for her customers. Today, she operates her brick-and-mortar store in Kenner, Louisiana, alongside her husband and two daughters to keep the family traditions alive.



### ABOUT TIFFANY

#### CONNECT

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# LANA JOSEPH

## JRUMZ EAR WEAR

Founder and CEO of High-Level Speech & Hearing Center and Joseph-Ford Enterprises, Dr. Lana Joseph-Ford, affectionately known as Dr. J., is an award-winning Audiologist whose childhood adversity became a catalyst for good. As a child, she suffered from hearing difficulties and a speech impediment and was bullied as a result. She has since leveraged that adversity by offering early intervention strategies for individuals with communication disorders. Dr. Joseph-Ford has served as an advocate for musicians' health throughout New Orleans. Among her most notable clients are world-renowned music artists, Drake, and the musical group Tank and the Bangas. She has also played a significant role in supporting youth in underserved communities as a committed philanthropist.

### ABOUT LANA

#### CONNECT

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# CHARON FLOWERS MAPLE

## BYPASSLINES

With over two decades of experience in development, communications, and management, Charon Flowers Maple co-founded BypassLines. This digital ordering platform connects businesses with customers through a quick, streamlined process. Inspired by the intersection of creativity and technology, BypassLines increases engagement by enhancing the user's experience through various services, including QR code ordering, online and mobile ordering, shipping, integrations, and more. As technology continues to evolve, Maple is committed to maintaining a high standard of client satisfaction.



### ABOUT CHARON

#### CONNECT

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# LYDIA CUTRER

## THE O.W.N. LIFE

Real estate consultant and licensed salesperson, Lydia Cutrer, is the CEO of Daily Investments DBA The O.W.N. Life. With an innate desire to help her clients build wealth through real estate, Cutrer has extensive experience in financing affordable housing and community facilities. She has overseen a homebuyer mortgage program and managed commercial real estate investments nationwide at JPMorgan Chase, PNC, and Calvert Impact Capital. Additionally, she managed a 1.5MM SF real estate portfolio and \$35MM in loans to 40 affordable housing developers. Lydia Cutrer attained an MBA from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and her BBA from Temple University.

### ABOUT LYDIA

#### CONNECT

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# SEMIRAH DOLAN

## NOIRE TECH LLC

Speaker, Inventor, and founding Partner of Noire Tech LLC, Semirah Dolan is an engineer with a background in mechanical engineering and computer science. Through Noire Tech LLC, Dolan provides blockchain and cloud computing consultation services. In addition to her accomplishments and qualifications as CEO, she received her business certification from George Washington School of Business.



### ABOUT SEMIRAH

#### CONNECT

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# TIA WHITTINGTON

## H KYLE BOUTIQUE

With eight years of experience in the retail merchandise industry, Tia Whittington is the owner and curator of H Kyle Boutique in Gonzales, Louisiana. Inspired by her late mother's passion for fashion and named after her daughter, Whittington started H Kyle Boutique in her mother's honor after dying of cancer in 2011. In addition to operating her business, Whittington is an active member of the Junior League of Baton Rouge and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



### ABOUT TIA

#### CONNECT

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# TERESA THOMAS

## CRAZY PLANT BAE

With a background in Agriculture Economics, International Trade, and Urban Planning, Teresa Thomas has been working in New Orleans over the past decade designing and building raised beds and planters, teaching residents how to grow their own edible plants. Thomas also manages a family Business, Crazy Plant Bae, which focuses primarily on indoor houseplants and tropical plants. As an avid botanist, Thomas prides herself on offering plant owners resources and support in their plant care and enjoys working in the community, enriching the school and retirement communities.



### ABOUT TERESA

#### CONNECT

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# TINA CURRY

## LOVELY BRIGHT SMILE

Founder and CEO of Lovely Bright Smile, Tina Curry graduated from Dillard University with her B.A. in Psychology but quickly pursued an alternative route, oral care. After spending time researching the market and discovering it was void of natural products, she began testing, planning, and creating her line. A year later, she launched her business, Lovely Bright Smile, an all-natural oral care company that focuses on healthy benefits while achieving a brighter smile.



### ABOUT TINA

#### CONNECT

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# OLIVIA SCOTT

## FREEDOM AT THE MAT

With over 27 years of experience in branding, agency, and media, Olivia F. Scott is the founder of Omerge Alliances, Creator of Freedom at the Mat & Assistant Professor of Advertising at Loyola University New Orleans. She fulfills many roles -- professor, entrepreneur, marketing consultant, and wellness advocate -- emphasizing beauty and wellness. As a respected leader and marketing maven, she also leverages her YouTube platform to advocate for self-care and encourage all women to prioritize taking care of themselves.



### ABOUT OLIVIA

#### CONNECT

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# SHAY CLAIBORNE

## MOMMYFLUENT

Founder of Mommyfluent Toy Store and native New Orleanian, Shay Claiborne, has worked in social services for the past six years. With an undergraduate degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Claiborne has experience with ABA therapy, mental health counseling, and case management. Her business, Mommyfluent Toy Store, merges her passion for family engagement and the importance of playtime with an underlying commitment to empowering and healing families.

### ABOUT SHAY

#### CONNECT

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