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A Note from Georgia....

February 11, 2020

Friends,

I have some news that I would like to share! With me, as usual, it must start with a story. In the late 1980s, there was an amazing place in the process of being saved. Our community had banded together to save the Ada Jenkins School from being demolished. The decision had been made to restore it so it could serve as a resource center for the region. I was fortunate enough to be invited to be part of that restoration, including painting walls and doing who knows what else!

Apparently, I did that well enough that I was invited to serve on the Board of Directors. I had the opportunity to work with great leaders including Bonnie Brown, Myra Harrison, Bernice Houston, Fountain Walker, Paula and John Kelton, Margo Williams, Frank Jordan, David Beatty, Guydell Connor, Garfield Carr, Nannie Potts, John Woods, Clarence Fox, Ralph Gable, Jane Avinger and many others. I was way out of my league! As a volunteer, I helped hire Diane Means as the Afterschool Director (still here after almost 20 years!) and Bill Johnson as the Executive Director following Bonnie Brown.

In mid-2008, I received a call asking if I would be interested in the soon to be vacated Executive Director position at the Ada Jenkins Center. I offered to serve as the Interim Director while they did a search. Well, it's now 2020 and I'm still here. The interim title was removed, and I kept sticking around...

One of the greatest honors of my life has been to be part of the Ada Jenkins Center. The Center has stood as a beacon of hope in our community since the early 1900s by providing education for countless children. It is a place of resilience and strength first as a school, then a community center, and now as the Ada Jenkins Center. The Ada Jenkins Center is important. What does and always has made it so critical - and a place of hope - is the people. It's the people served, and the people who serve, that make it what it is. It is a sincere privilege to be a part, albeit small, of its history.

Now, it's time for another page of that history to be turned. I am so proud of all that the Ada Jenkins Center stands for and is, that I have decided to retire at the end of June 2020. There is a phenomenal

group of people assembled here who love our client-partners and work tirelessly to support each one of their individual journey to economic stability.

This decision has been incredibly bittersweet and a difficult one to make. I love these people and the impact that the Ada Jenkins Center continues to have within our community. I daresay, it is one of, if not the most, important organization of its kind! The time feels right for me to step away later this year and embark on the next chapter in my life. We have a great leadership team and staff in place, the right strategic direction, and wonderful volunteers and supporters to sustain our mission and service to our communities. I could not be prouder of or more amazed by them. It is a gift to stand alongside them; *i.e.* get out of their way and let them do their magic! We have volunteers who are dedicated and serve in any capacity needed. And we have a Board that is engaged and very strong. It's a great time to leave because everything is so good.

Over the coming months, I will be working with our Board to help prepare for my departure and ensure a smooth transition. The Board has formed a search committee and retained a recruiting firm, Next Stage Consulting, to assist with a thorough search process of internal and external candidates to find a strong leader with a proven track record of strategic leadership, community service, and operational expertise. The board intends to select the new leader in time to ensure a smooth transition. I am absolutely committed to assisting in this process and providing a seamless transition for the new executive director.

This is a wonderful place and I am a far better person because of my time here. I'll miss being here but look forward to decompressing and spending time with my husband and four-legged children! Beyond that I have no real plans, but we are not going anywhere. I look forward to connecting with you over the next few months as I prepare of retirement and after that as well!

I appreciate your support of the Center past, present, and future. I know that it will remain vital and relevant for many, many decades.

With appreciation and a bit of sadness,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Georgia".

Georgia

PS: In case you know of anyone interested in the Executive Director position, please have them contact search@nextstageconsulting.com.