



Give Him His Flowers

-Hunter Hudson Media

On a rainy Friday evening in Atlanta traffic creeps slowly through the city... A scene not at all unfamiliar in the city too busy to hate. However, on this evening the rain carries additional significance, as its presence highlights a deeper symbolism for the events which lay ahead. In our cultural lexicon we often speak of “giving people their flowers while they can smell them”, and almost implicit in both this cliché and our sincere desire to honor them lies an open acknowledgment of the rainy days that an honoree had to endure in order to bloom into a season worthy of celebration.

On this evening, Savvy Girl Consulting founders Nikiya Bain and Tonita Bybee struck the perfect chord with their inaugural awards ceremony entitled the **Georgia Founding Fathers Initiative** hosted at Atlanta’s City Hall. With intentionality the event honored seventeen men whose contributions to family, community, and a variety of industries were undeniable. With the crem de le crème of those honorees being two-time grammy award winning producer Teddy Riley; a singer, songwriter, producer, and author who has survived the storms of the music industry and lived to tell the story.





The founding member of the legendary R&B group Guy, Teddy Riley has produced for the likes of Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Bobby Brown, Lady Gaga, Mary J. Blige, and Keith Sweat just to name a few. The innovator and inventor of the New Jack Swing production style, his influence on music is global and his impact cannot be quantified in record sales alone. In real life motion his light and aura permeates us with spiritual coolness, and on this evening, it transported us back to the moment, we first heard “Let’s Chill” ... You can hear it now... teasing you with all the anecdotal flashes of crushes, loves, and one-night stands that accompany your memories...and that’s in its ethereal essence is the impact of Teddy Riley.



This thoughtfully designed and well-executed evening was beautifully bookended by a statement from Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens, and as nature and metaphors alike would have it, at its conclusion the storm clouds had passed over us, and the rain was no more. It is not everyday that one gets the opportunity to smell the flowers harvested from the garden of their toils, and so we too salute Teddy Riley on his iconic life journey and his well-deserved bouquet.