



Photo by Denise Gray Photography

GEORGE BANDY JR.

The Green and the Great

by Alonia Jernigan

Long before the concepts, “going green,” “sustainability” and “diversity” became the popular buzzwords they are today, there was a brother already on the frontline. His name is George Bandy Jr., and although he favorably stood in his father’s shadow much of his life, today he holds his own. Currently serving as vice president of Interface Americas, a commercial textiles company, he possesses more than 12 years’ experience as a champion for the advancement of African Americans in the aforementioned areas. Without a doubt, his work speaks for him.

For obvious reasons, it’s not surprising that Bandy has often been confused with his father. The elder Bandy was the first African-American councilman in Opelika, Alabama. He went on to serve as county commissioner and as a member of the House of Representatives, wherein he served for ten years. He is the only living African American in that region to have a park named in his honor. The younger Bandy was proud to have had the opportunity to work with Opelika’s mayor in this endeavor, and he counts it as his greatest success story.

These days, however, Bandy is creating new success stories of his own. It didn’t dawn on him, though, until years later when he was appointed chairman of the U.S. Green Building Council, Atlanta Regional Chapter. “Someone walked up to my dad and asked him if he was related to me,” he recalls. “It used to be the other way around, but since people ask him all the time now, it’s an ongoing joke between us.”

The good times continue to roll because as Bandy’s career progresses, he is creating a legacy that his children will likewise be able to cherish. As part of

Interface Americas’ team since 1999, he has played a major role in increasing the company’s supplier diversity efforts from \$4 million to \$15 million in three years. Prior to joining Interface, Bandy spent four years at the University of Texas at Houston as the sustainability officer, making him the first sustainability officer in a university setting. He clarifies, “I was definitely the first African American to work in this capacity in a university setting. This set me on the course of being a vice president of Interface.” Both experiences have brought him face-to-face with the environmental issues of the day. He says, “The need for generations to come to be environmentally conscious is going to be paramount. The people who will be making major decisions are people of color. We’re going to have to express beyond what’s been.” With that thought in mind, Bandy works diligently to spread this message of urgency.

Ever mindful of his desire to serve others, the Omega Psi Phi and former educator constantly gives of himself. He is a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) accredited professional and a board member for the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council, among other affiliations. His accolades range from being recognized as Teacher of the Year twice in California, and the Community Leadership Award from Harvard Business School Atlanta Club.

Attending Morehouse College on an athletic scholarship (basketball and football), Bandy holds a degree in English/business management. He and his wife, Carmen, of 15 years, are the parents of two daughters and a set of fraternal twins.