



## **JM Family, Southeast Toyota and JM Lexus Announce the 2016 African-American Achievers**

***\$40,000 to be Donated on Behalf of this Year's Honorees***

Deerfield Beach, Fla. – Four inspiring community leaders will be honored for their contributions to South Florida at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual **African-American Achievers awards ceremony on Wednesday, April 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Broward County Convention Center.**

The 2016 African-American Achievers are:

**Dixie Lee Hedrington-Miller** - Arts & Culture  
**Jaret L. Davis** - Business & Entrepreneurism  
**Gilbert Lancelot Raiford, Ph.D.** - Community Service  
**Ricky Wiggins** - Education

\* [Click here](#) to download individual headshots. ***Bios of the Achievers are included below.***

In recognition of this year's Achievers and their efforts to improve the quality of life in our community, JM Family and subsidiaries Southeast Toyota Distributors and JM Lexus will make a contribution of \$10,000 in each Achiever's name to the charity(ies) of his or her choice, totaling \$40,000. Including the contributions to be made this year, JM Family has donated nearly \$450,000 to charitable organizations in the names of its African-American Achievers.

The 2016 honorees were selected by an independent panel of community leaders, including former Achievers, from Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties. The selection committee reviewed more than 250 nominations received from around South Florida after an extensive public outreach campaign.

“Our company’s founder Jim Moran created this program to recognize unsung heroes for the accomplishments and contributions they make in South Florida,” said Colin Brown, president and CEO of JM Family. “This year’s Achievers are role models in our community with stories of hardship, perseverance and selfless giving. We look forward to honoring them and celebrating the impact they have made.”

Look for the 2016 Achievers and their stories in public service announcements by media partners WPLG Local 10, WPTV Channel 5, WEDR-FM 99 JAMZ, WHQT-FM HOT 105, WMBX-FM 102.3, and in print advertisements throughout South Florida.

### **About the 2016 Honorees:**

#### **Arts & Culture: Dixie Lee Hedrington-Miller**

Dixie Lee Hedrington-Miller, a professional artist, quickly found there were limited creative outlets for people with disabilities when looking for enriching activities for her son, who is deaf. With a desire to create change, she founded Friends & Stars Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to enhancing the well-being of South Florida’s special needs children and adults through inclusive arts programs. By providing individualized attention in an environment of acceptance, Hedrington-Miller and her team help students discover their unique artistic expression. She also works with museums and public spaces to display her students’ pieces. Through her efforts, participants gain confidence and pride, and many have gone on to pursue a career in the arts. Hedrington-Miller’s talent and passion for teaching demonstrate that limitations can be conquered when you are willing to try.

#### **Business & Entrepreneurism: Jaret L. Davis**

As an undergraduate at the University of Miami, Jaret L. Davis minored in computer science before going on to pursue his law degree. His passion for technology turned into opportunity when he began his legal career during the dot-com boom of the 90s at Greenberg Traurig in Miami, where he is now Co-managing Shareholder. Davis’ knowledge made him an important resource for the growing sector. Throughout his career, Davis has helped build Miami’s tech ecosystem, including co-founding the eMerge Americas Technology Conference and bringing together thought leaders in the industry. He volunteers as a mentor in the startup community, particularly focusing on African American-owned companies. As an advisor to investors and venture capitalists, he also serves as the critical link in connecting tech startups with funding. A South Florida native, Davis is dedicated to fostering our community’s growth by helping business and entrepreneurship thrive.

#### **Community Service: Gilbert Lancelot Raiford, Ph.D.**

Dr. Gilbert Lancelot Raiford has spent his life dedicated to the advancement of others, including nearly 40 years teaching university students. The product of a humble and rural upbringing, Raiford studied social welfare and mental health policy, which propelled him to help underserved populations in his community. His outreach includes aiding the homeless, uniting families, counseling students and assisting the elderly. While tutoring children in Liberty City, Raiford learned none of them had been on a

plane, eaten at a restaurant or left the county. In response, he raised the funds to take 25 youths on a weeklong trip to Washington DC to experience the city's culture and history. Raiford is a true resource to those in need and often takes people in to his own home and provides them with shelter and assistance.

### **Education: Ricky Wiggins**

For 20 years, Ricky Wiggins has been mentoring young dreamers in a community facing challenging economic circumstances through the I Have A Dream Foundation. Wiggins motivates his students, fueling the desire to learn and think beyond their current environment and realize their full potential. He has encouraged, inspired and pushed a generation of young people to stay on the path toward completing school and pursuing higher education. Often times, Wiggins is a father figure to children who lack a consistent positive role model in their lives. He knows every child is capable and deserving of a helping hand on their path to adulthood. Wiggins' vision becomes reality when each young person who succeeds as a result of his mentorship transforms into an adult who gives back to the community that invested in them.

### **RSVP**

The community is invited to attend the awards ceremony on Wednesday, April 20. To RSVP by April 15, visit [www.africanamericanachievers.com](http://www.africanamericanachievers.com) or call 866-516-2497, and check out the African-American Achievers [Facebook page](#).

**Learn more about the program and past honorees at [www.africanamericanachievers.com](http://www.africanamericanachievers.com) and [become a fan on Facebook](#).**

### **About JM Family Enterprises, Inc.**

[JM Family Enterprises, Inc.](#), founded by Jim Moran in 1968, is a \$14.5 billion diversified automotive company ranked No. 23 on *Forbes'* list of "America's Largest Private Companies." It is also ranked No. 34 by FORTUNE® as one of the 100 Best Companies to Work For®, its 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive year on the list. JM Family has approximately 4,100 associates and its primary subsidiaries include: [Southeast Toyota Distributors](#), the world's largest independent distributor of Toyota and Scion vehicles; [JM&A Group](#), one of the leading independent providers of finance and insurance (F&I) products in the automotive industry; [World Omni Financial Corp.](#), a diversified financial services company; [JM Lexus](#), the largest volume Lexus dealership in the world; and JM Service Center LLC, the company's internal shared services center. Headquartered in Deerfield Beach, Fla., JM Family has major U.S. operations in Jacksonville and Margate, Fla.; Commerce and Alpharetta, Ga.; Mobile, Ala.; and St. Louis, Mo. Interact with JM Family at [Facebook.com/JMFamilyEnterprises](https://www.facebook.com/JMFamilyEnterprises).

### **Media Contacts:**

Christie Caliendo

(954) 363-6285

[Christie.Caliendo@jmfamily.com](mailto:Christie.Caliendo@jmfamily.com)