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BL²END

Business Leaders Linked to Encourage New Directions

Mission

To foster an environment of growth and belonging, where young professionals of color can connect with each other, develop professionally, and contribute to the local community.

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Presents:

A Professional Development Event

Hosted and Sponsored by



**Built to Last:
Everybody's Grand Rapids**

June 24, 2014

5:30 p.m.

Varnum

333 Bridge St NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49501

Program

5:30- 6:30 p.m.

Hors d'oeuvres

6:30 p.m.

Welcome

Brian Parks

President, *BL²END*

Built to Last: Everybody's Grand Rapids

Mayor George Heartwell

City of Grand Rapids

7:50

Closing Remarks

Brian Parks

President, *BL²END*



Mayor George Heartwell

City of Grand Rapids

Now serving his third term, Mayor George Heartwell took office on January 1, 2004. During his tenure, City government has implemented a variety of environmental measures, including purchase of renewable resource

energy, use of alternative fuels in city vehicles, continued attention to water quality in the Grand River, and widespread implementation of energy conservation measures. In January 2007 the United Nations recognized Grand Rapids as a "Regional Center of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development."

Grand Rapids is widely recognized as one of the most sustainable cities in America. In 2010 the US Chamber of Commerce gave Grand Rapids the "Nation's Most Sustainable City" award, and in 2012 Mayor Heartwell was given the first place Climate Protection Award by the US Conference of Mayors.

With twenty-two colleges or universities in the metropolitan area, Grand Rapids is known as a knowledge center. Human medicine, medical education, and health research is the most rapidly growing economic cluster. Even during times of severe economic downturn, Grand Rapids has shown remarkable economic resiliency.

George Heartwell is married to Susan who directs the Student Advancement Foundation. George and Susan are proud parents of three adult children and six extraordinary grandchildren.

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