



**UNITE FOR GOOD**

## KeyWay Weekly Newsletter

### **This Week's Program:**

#### *Club Assembly*



Our upcoming meeting will be a Club Assembly, a dedicated time for members to come together and focus on the business of our own club. Assemblies provide the chance to step back from outside speakers and look inward at how we are doing, where we are headed, and how we can best serve our community.

We will review current and upcoming projects, discuss ways to strengthen our fellowship and membership, and make plans for events that will highlight Rotary's impact in the West End and beyond. This is also a time for every member's voice to be heard, so please come prepared to share your ideas, your concerns, and your vision for our path ahead.

Club Assemblies remind us that Rotary is not just about service in the community but also about building a strong, connected, and vibrant club family. Your participation matters. Whether you join us in person or online, your presence and participation make a difference.

<b>JOIN ONLINE</b>	<b>Dial In</b>
Zoom Link - <a href="#">Click here</a>	1-646-558-8656
Meeting ID: 874 0116 4307	Meeting ID: 874 0116 4307
Passcode: Service	Passcode: 846122

***September's Theme is Basic Education and Literacy:  
Fridays: 5, 12, 19, 26***



**KeyWay Report on Our Speaker**  
**Ms. Shelly Goodrum, Assistant Superintendent, Atlanta**  
**Public Schools**  
**Booker T. Washington High School Cluster**  
**September 1, 2025 |**  
**AWER Weekly Meeting**

Our AWER speaker **Ms. Shelly Goodrum**, K-12 Cluster Superintendent for the Booker T. Washington Cluster in Atlanta Public Schools. Ms. Goodrum was introduced by **Ms. Aretta Baldon** of the Atlanta Board of Education, District 2 Elected Representative. Ms. Goodrum explained that the Booker T. Washington High School Cluster includes H.J. Russell West End Academy, Hollis Innovation Academy, M. Agnes Jones Elementary School, and the Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy Elementary School.

Citing progress, Ms. Goodrum reported the Washington Cluster schools have demonstrated significant academic improvement in recent years. Washington High School achieved an 80% graduation rate, the highest in several years, with graduates earning over \$13 million in scholarships. Herman J. Russell West End Academy posted its best math performance since 2015, with 14% of students reaching proficiency. Hollis Innovation Academy (K-8) showed growth with 16.8% of students proficient in English Language Arts (ELA) and 18% in science, representing their best results in almost a decade. Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy (TAG) leads with one-third of students proficient in math, their highest achievement since 2015. Student attendance has also improved, with chronic absenteeism decreasing by 12%. Despite these improvements, she said, achievement gaps remain, with far too many students still not meeting grade-level standards.

Ms. Goodrum's plans for greater improvements center on: (a) the importance of high expectations, (b) professionals using data available to make the best instructional and programmatic decisions, and (c) supportive culture in school improvement. The latter includes community organizations in addressing student needs beyond academics. Further, the best student support must come from parent-caregiver participation. She said a lack of home support is a major barrier to academic achievement. Ms. Goodrum gave vignettes including: a Washington High student who has lost a parent and who cares for a younger sibling, has a job yet despite these barriers has gained a college scholarship ... but also described another very bright but disengaged student with seemingly no home support but gaining intense support from teachers, which is vital but not enough. Ms. Goodrum lamented the absence of parents and caregivers supporting their kids as students, especially disheartening given children's talent and potential.

So questions emerge: What strategies can improve parental involvement in schools that face socioeconomic, cultural, or structural challenges—such as poverty, language barriers, or high student mobility? What can be done to support students' personal challenges that affect their academic performance? How can local businesses unite to create employment opportunities for students? How should community partnerships be

built to support students facing personal challenges beyond what schools alone can address.

She also raised the question: What has been successful in helping students who are dealing with challenging home situations that affect their school performance ... and responded by saying that while every student's need is individual and unique, schools respond case-by-case, including providing personal care products, working with social workers to find resources. Even when parents aren't involved, educators take responsibility to be the voice for students and provide caring support, which brings hope.

Ms. Shelly Goodrum emphasized that schools cannot transform without active community participation. Rather than hold discussions only at the schools, she addresses low parental involvement by providing "critical conversations" at different community locations rather than expecting parents to come to the school. Recent meetings were held at John Hope Recreation Center and Hunter Hill Baptist Church to accommodate transportation challenges. She's considering adding virtual options to increase accessibility. APS itself has built a student and parent HUB, located in the old Oglethorpe Elementary building, which provides resources including a grocery store, clothing closet, and other support services for families in need. Further, all Cluster schools maintain closets with school supplies. Ms. Goodrum emphasized to AWER: students will, and do, thrive if, and when, supported.

Ms. Goodrum, together with club members, identified actionable steps that Rotarians can take to enhance support for Washington Cluster students. These include donating personal care items and facilitating the transfer of professional clothing collected by the club in the previous year. Additionally, club members are encouraged to engage local businesses to establish employment opportunities designed for students, thereby equipping young people with resources and experiences that help lay a foundation for success.

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*KeyWay Speaker Reporters*  
*Jared Evans and Neil Shorthouse*

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## **September is Basic Education and Literacy Month**

### *Building Community Through Learning*

September is Rotary International's official focus month for Basic Education and Literacy, one of Rotary's seven core areas of focus and a cornerstone of its efforts to foster individual growth and sustainable community development

Let's celebrate Basic Education and Literacy Month by lifting up local learning. Whether through material support, personal mentorship, or simply spreading awareness. Our combined actions make a difference. Let's show how AWER builds brighter futures, one lesson learned at a time.

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

- 9/26: Board of Directors Mtg
- 9/26: Club Assembly
- 9/27: WEND Candlelight Concert
- 10/3: District Governor Steve Ivory
- 10/10: Micheal Mumper
- 10/25: ATL Tech. College 5K
- 10/26: Streets Alive! *West End*
- 10/31: Judith Fuller & Threshold Choir Voice of Love

**Sign up to be a program chair [here](#) today!**

### **CELEBRATIONS**

#### **Birthdays**

Uku Urb: September 3

#### **Service Anniversaries**

Don Schewe: 44 years September 1

Elma McCutchen: 2 years September 15

Uku Urb: 2 years September 16

Debra Stokes: 3 years September 23

### **Meeting Agenda**

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation & Pledge
3. Introduction of Guests
4. Tasse Trivia
5. DEI Moment
6. Announcements
7. Program/Speaker
8. The Four-Way Test
9. Adjournment

### **RY2025–2026 Board of Directors**

**President:** *Dr. Victoria Seals*

**Co-Presidents-Elect:** *Debra Stokes & Chris Hempfling*

**Immediate Past President:** *Jared Evans*

**Secretary:** *Neil Shorthouse*

**Treasurer:** *Rose Caplan*

**Club Administration:** *Chris Hempfling*

**Membership Chair:** *Sonia Hantman*

**Public Image Chair:** *Jared Evans*

**Service Projects Chair:** *Carolina Ramos*

**The Rotary Foundation Chair:** *Debra Stokes*

**DEI Chair:** *Marilyn Jackson*

### **THE FOUR-WAY TEST of the things we think, say or do**



*first* **Is it the TRUTH?**

*second* **Is it FAIR to all concerned?**

*third* **Will it build GOOD WILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**

*fourth* **Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?**

**Stay Connected with AWER:**

**Email:** [inforotaryawe@gmail.com](mailto:inforotaryawe@gmail.com)

**Website:** [atlantawestendrotary.org](http://atlantawestendrotary.org)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/RotaryAWE](https://facebook.com/RotaryAWE)

**Instagram:** [@rotaryatlantawestend](https://www.instagram.com/rotaryatlantawestend)

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