

William F. Pickard

2019 – 2025

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

William F. Pickard, PhD is Chairman and Executive Founder of GAA Manufacturing and Supply Chain Management, GAA New Ventures, Co-Managing Partner MGM Grand Detroit Casino, CEO of Bearwood Management McDonald's and co-owner of five black-owned newspapers.

Pickard's 48th entrepreneurial career began as a McDonald's franchisee in Detroit, Michigan. Since its founding in 1989, GAA has generated more than \$5 billion dollars in sales with eight plants in the U.S. and Canada, and service corporations such as Boeing, Mercedes Benz, Ford, General Motors, Chrysler, Delphi, Johnson Controls, Starbucks, Home Depot and Merck Pharmaceutical.

He has served on numerous business and non-profit boards including Asset Acceptance Capital Corporation, Michigan National Bank, LaSalle Bank, Business Leaders for Michigan, National Urban League, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Black Chamber of Commerce and is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. In 2001, Pickard was awarded Michiganiaan of the Year for his business success, civic leadership and philanthropy. Pickard was the first Chairman of the African Development Foundation in 1982, appointed by President Ronald Reagan, and under President George Bush he was appointed to The National Advisory Committee on Trade Policy Negotiations (1990) the Federal Home Loan Bank Board-Indianapolis Bank in Indiana (1991).

Dr. Pickard is creating a new generation of entrepreneurs with Millionaire Moves – Seven Proven Principles of Entrepreneurship, vision/attitude, opportunity, relationships, talent/skillset, financial, failure and faith. He is writing his second book on African American entrepreneurs from 1850 to 1950. Dr. Pickard holds a Bachelor's Degree from Western Michigan University, a Master's Degree from the University of Michigan and a PhD from The Ohio State University.

In his philanthropic efforts he continues to contribute to education, arts, culture and entrepreneurship. Named in his honor are The William F. Pickard Living Center at Grand Valley State University and Western Michigan University's Hall-Archer-Pickard East and Hall-Archer-Pickard West. Dr. Pickard has made significant donations to National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Motown Historical Museum, Detroit Symphony Orchestra in honor of Arthur L. Johnson and Judge Damon J. Keith and Wayne County Community College District in honor of Deborah Green Virgiles and Maurene Brown Smith.

