

# Yolanda Brown, MBA

Creator | Director | Founder of Fun Spaces

---

## Summary

Yolanda Brown is the Founder, CEO and Play Strategist of Fun Spaces, Inc. and currently serves as an officer on the Board of Directors of Urban Ministries of Durham as well as Committee Chair for her sons' Cub Scouts pack. Yolanda is passionate about entrepreneurship and business. She has coached and consulted entrepreneurs since 2003. She has directly helped over 100 entrepreneurs across the Southeast U.S. by writing and developing business plans, marketing plans, commercial loan packaging, MWBE application packaging and much more. She was recently accepted as a coach on the coach.me platform. In 2005, she began blogging and freelance business writing in 2010 which expanded her impact with many more entrepreneurs across the country. She is regarded by others as a thought leader and influencer. She currently writes on entrepreneurship, parenting and other relevant topics for mom entrepreneurs. Yolanda's previous career experiences include various roles in higher education, management consulting, online publishing, retail, non-profit, telecommunications, and wireless. Fun Fact: Yolanda's top strengths as measured by Gallop's Strength Finder: Restorative, Relator, Connectedness, Futuristic, Individualization Yolanda earned a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia, an MBA from UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School, and professional certifications from Dartmouth College, U.S. Minority Business Development Agency and National Development Council. Specialties: Leadership, Business Analysis, Strategic Planning, Business Planning, Management, Small Business, Coaching, Entrepreneur, Nonprofits, Financial Analysis, Social Media, Marketing, Content Creation

---

## Experience

### **Board Treasurer at Urban Ministries of Durham**

July 2014 - Present (1 year 6 months)

- \* Create strategies for optimal financial strategy as finance committee chair (lead of five member multi-functional team).
- \* Provide oversight to annual audit and budgeting processes.
- \* Reconcile financial transactions and report financial standing to board of directors on monthly basis.

### **Member, Board of Directors at Urban Ministries of Durham**

July 2013 - Present (2 years 6 months)

Provide strategic oversight for a 501(c)(3) social services nonprofit with \$1.7 million operating budget to supply food, shelter and a future to over 6,000 of Durham's very poor and hungry population. \* Assisted in raising over \$250,000 during current tenure on the board. \* Share thought leadership on corporate policies and strategic planning. \* Volunteer in shelter and as representative at community events.

### **Founder at Fun Spaces, Inc.**

2010 - Present (5 years)

We provide on-site child care and programming during weddings, receptions, parties, reunions and other special events with fun, safe caregivers and age-appropriate, engaging play activities. We offer the convenience of being at the event venue and entertaining children while their parents "play" in another room.

\* Create play programming for children of different age blocks in accordance with event theme \* Interview candidates and hire staff who fit company culture to support larger events \* Successfully held events at Treyburne Country Club, Chapel Hill Country Club, Carolina Inn, Kenan-Flagler Business School (UNC), Fuqua School of Business (Duke) and The Carolina Club

### **President at Cardinal Business Strategies, Inc.**

2010 - 2015 (5 years)

Founded corporation to create solutions using strategy development and content creation to meet needs of consumers and businesses using various channels. \* New Business Planning & Launch (Fun Spaces) \* Market Research \* Marketing Strategy \* Social Media & Blogging

### **Business Consultant at YB Consulting**

2005 - 2011 (6 years)

Sole proprietor business consultancy providing business plan development, organizational structuring and general business advisory to local firms. Responsibilities: \* Counsel clients for preparing business proposals, goals, and infrastructure for firm growth. \* Publish articles with business building guidelines for small to medium sized firms for various venues on the internet \* Manage business development activities to attract new clients and referrals Selected Achievements: \* Created business plan and presentation for start-up to enter Wal-Mart as a vendor. Selected by Wal-Mart corporate office and has successfully completed first business season. \* Developed business plan for a \$1 million+ Construction Company to diversify their business from solely residential to include more commercial and government projects. \* Negotiated partnership to provide services for clients of local business incubator resulting in stronger positioning for client financing.

### **President at Triangle Urban League Young Professionals**

2007 - 2009 (2 years)

Elected to lead local chapter of young professionals auxiliary tasked to empower our local communities and change lives through volunteerism and philanthropy while executing the mission of the National Urban League. \* Increased group's community participation and improved membership participation through strategic planning as lead of ten-person executive committee. \* Facilitated and planned monthly meeting agenda including identifying guest speakers to enhance the membership experience. \* Led partnership with three other community organizations to present networking seminar to over 40 attendees of various career levels - an attendance achievement for all organizations represented. Recruited panel members, and acquired venue and other resources necessary to hold successful meeting.

### **Business Consultant at NCIMED**

February 2006 - September 2008 (2 years 8 months)

Consulted and trained companies at economic development nonprofit serving 100 counties in North Carolina.

\* Business plan review & analysis \* Financial analysis \* Loan packaging \* Minority business enterprise and women business enterprise certification packaging \* Public Speaking & Training

### **Teaching Assistant at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

September 2004 - May 2005 (9 months)

Evaluated and graded homework, papers and exams for graduate financial and managerial accounting courses, and undergraduate global marketing course at Kenan-Flagler Business School

### **MBA Student at UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School**

July 2003 - May 2005 (1 year 11 months)

MBA Student Association Vice President of Student Activities \* Organized and conducted two student government elections with 32 candidates and 275 voters \* Led and organized 16 member committee in campaign to raise \$135,000 for school endowment MBASA Alumni Affairs Board \* Facilitated alumni mentoring program for MBA students Alumni Relations Chair, Alliance of Minority Business Students (AMBS) \* Developed and edited quarterly alumni newsletter to reach over 200 UNC alumni \* Communicated events of interest to alumni and recruited alumni for school events

### **Product Development Intern at FedEx Services**

June 2004 - August 2004 (3 months)

Developed internal enrichment product on a best of breed new product development process at a Fortune 100 transportation services provider. \* Evaluated current methods and captured voice of product stakeholders to ensure relevance. \* Presented product to executive management for direct implementation. Results support corporate goal of 21% reduction in product time-to-market. \* Co-managed summer FedEx executive training course at the University of Memphis.

### **Marketing Analyst at S & R Furniture**

June 2002 - June 2003 (1 year 1 month)

Supported development of strategic business plan for and assisted operational start-up of a family business venture. \* Led marketing efforts to define store image and advertising approach which effectively increased market exposure and customer base. \* Developed and maintained databases for store inventory and sales orders to improve inventory management and sales forecasting.

### **Executive Board Member at National Society Of Black Engineers**

April 2001 - April 2003 (2 years 1 month)

Leadership roles in local alumni chapter of national professional development organization. Membership Chair ('01 -'02) and College Initiative Chair ('02 -'03) Major Achievement: \* Won National Leadership Award for creation and implementation of a mentorship program between five student chapters and area alumni.

### **Consultant at COMSYS**

October 2000 - May 2002 (1 year 8 months)

Supply Chain Prepaid Analyst, 2001 - 2002 Managed legacy prepaid product supply process for retail in the southeast at Voicestream Wireless (now T-Mobile) \* Reduced product distribution time by 30% for average production worth estimated \$19.5 million in sales per month of prepaid product supply process at southeast retail of leading national wireless services provider. \* Conducted troubleshooting of product issues for customer service, vendors, and company executives to resolve end-user concerns and support security measures. \* Educated new management on legacy business process to support integration efforts. \* Initiated support in project management organization for data migration projects. \* Collaborated with cross-functional team to ease transition of prepaid customers into new system, and helped complete projects on-time with low incidents. Cable/Framework Engineer, Lucent Technologies, 2000 - 2001 Determined customer requirements and supplied system development plans for a global supplier of communications networking equipment.

### **Marketing Assistant at Welding Services**

May 2000 - October 2000 (6 months)

---

## Projects

### **DCP Marketing Update**

January 2012 to May 2012

Members: Yolanda B., Amy Pine, Elizabeth Shestak

Updated web and brochure copy for DCP marketing to better reflect the school's essence.

---

## Courses

### **MBA, Marketing, Sustainable Enterprise**

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - Kenan-

Flagler Business School

Project Management

Entrepreneurship Consulting

Negotiations

Marketing Strategy

---

## Skills & Expertise

**Leadership**

**Strategy**

**Social Media**

**Entrepreneurship**

**Team Building**

**Start-ups**

**Nonprofits**

**Microsoft Excel**

**Program Management**  
**Management**  
**Business Planning**  
**Small Business**  
**Public Speaking**  
**Event Management**  
**Blogging**  
**Cross-functional Team Leadership**  
**Coaching**  
**Business Analysis**  
**Leadership Development**  
**Team Leadership**  
**Wordpress**  
**Email Marketing**  
**Customer Service**  
**Copywriting**  
**Keyword Research**  
**Presenter**  
**Web Presence**  
**Strategic Planning**  
**Project Management**  
**Writing**  
**Corporate Communications**  
**Community Outreach**  
**Problem Solving**  
**Marketing**  
**Customer Relations**  
**Collaboration**  
**WordPress**

---

## Education

### **Leadership North Carolina**

North Carolina and Leadership, 2008 - 2009

Activities and Societies: 2009-2010 LNC Economic Development Session Planning Committee

### **National Development Council**

Certificate, Economic Development Finance Professional, 2006 - 2006

### **The Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth**

Certificate, Implementing a System for High Quality Service: Building Adaptive Minority  
Businesses, 2006 - 2006

Activities and Societies: Minority Business Development Agency

### **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - Kenan-Flagler Business School**

MBA, Marketing, Sustainable Enterprise, 2003 - 2005

Activities and Societies: Consortium for Graduate Study in Management, Vice President - MBA Student Association, Co-Founder - Kenan-Flagler Toastmasters, Alumni Relations Chair - Alliance of Minority Business Students, Net Impact, Marketing Club

### **University of Missouri-Columbia**

BS, Industrial Engineering, 1995 - 1999

Activities and Societies: National Society of Black Engineers, United Way Day of Caring Steering Committee, Americorps, Institute of Industrial Engineers

---

## Honors and Awards

### **Integrity Core Value Award**

Kenan-Flagler Business School MBA Class of 2005

May 2005

### **2nd Place, Team Captain in Goldman Sachs Business Case Competition**

Executive Leadership Council

May 2005

### **National Leadership Award**

National Society of Black Engineers - Alumni Extension

May 2003

### **Conference Attendee**

The Ph.D. Project

November 2005

Invited to attend The Ph.D. Project annual conference with all expenses paid. Conference was created to improve diversity in the business academic and corporate arena by encouraging African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans to earn a business doctorate and become business school professors..

### **George C. Brooks Scholarship Recipient**

University of Missouri-Columbia

1995

Four year full scholarship (in 1995)

### **Executive Board Member of the Year**

National Society of Black Engineers - MU Chapter

1999

### **Kenan-Flagler Fellowship**

Kenan-Flagler Business School

August 2003

---

## Volunteer Experience

### **Board Treasurer at Urban Ministries of Durham**

July 2013 - Present (2 years 6 months)

Our mission is to meet emergency needs for food, clothing, and shelter; and to help those who are homeless secure a home and the resources to stay there. Elected Board Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair in May 2014.

**Advisor at Educare Community Resources & Outreach, Inc**

2011 - 2012 (1 year)

Advised the founder of an academic after-school program for at-risk children in Wilson, NC. Organization has since dissolved.

**Alumni Interviewer at The Consortium for Graduate Study in Management**

2008 - 2011 (3 years)

Interviewed and assessed MBA candidates for prestigious merit-based fellowship.

**Southeast Certification Committee Member at Greater Women's Business Council**

2007 - 2008 (1 year)

Reviewed, interviewed, conducted site-visits, evaluated and determined recommendations for companies and business owners who applied for Women-Owned Business (WBE) certification.

**Alumni Council Member at Kenan-Flagler Business School**

2006 - 2010 (4 years)

Founding member of a team that advised business school executives and staff on programming and marketing direction along with other school issues at undergraduate and graduate levels.

**Steering Committee Member, Old Reliable Run at United Way of the Greater Triangle**

2006 - 2007 (1 year)

Worked on committee twice to support planning of fundraiser 5k race. Volunteered on race day.

**Scouter at Boy Scouts of America**

September 2013 - Present (2 years 4 months)

Adult volunteer for son's Cub Scouts packs. Assistant Den Leader (2013-2014); Committee Chair (2015-2016).

**Volunteer at Central Park School for Children**

2013 - Present (2 years)

Class Parent and member of the Equity Committee.

**Marketing Committee Volunteer at Durham Community Preschool**

August 2011 - May 2012 (10 months)

Created new web content; led development and content creation for revised print brochure; preschool webmaster.

**Meal Delivery Volunteer at Meals on Wheels of Durham**

February 2010 - September 2013 (3 years 8 months)

Delivered meals and interacted with elderly and disabled clients throughout east and downtown Durham; supervised my children while they supported deliveries and client engagement. Used this as a way to introduce my young children to community service.

---

## Publications

### **Key Steps to Starting a Business**

ehow.com

Authors: Yolanda B.

### **How to Remove a Board Member From a North Carolina Nonprofit**

ehow.com

Authors: Yolanda B.

### **Can Lower Tiered Subcontractors Be Counted in Government Small Business Goals?**

ehow.com

Authors: Yolanda B.

---

## Interests

Baking, Genealogy, Running, Traveling, Economic Development, Community Service, Small Business, Entrepreneurship, Mentoring

---

## Certifications

### **Economic Development Finance Professional**

National Development Council 2006

### **Implementing a System for High Quality Service: Building Adaptive Minority Businesses**

Minority Business Development Agency - U.S. Department of Commerce 2006

---

## Languages

**English**

---



# Yolanda Brown, MBA

Creator | Director | Founder of Fun Spaces

---



## 10 people have recommended Yolanda

"Yolanda is an exceptional leader. I have known of her excellence through multiple venues. In the National Society of Black Engineers she positioned me to lead for the Academic Excellence Chair in college. Yolanda is also a great presenter and organizer. Her work with local community organizations helped me to connect with a larger community of business professionals when I was new in the area. She is a thought leader and an excellent business woman. She led mastermind teams to accomplish business goals by establishing regular communication and sound accountability across the team. She is incredibly dynamic and resourceful. She finds and creates new opportunities all of the time. She is a magnificent asset to any and all teams."

— **Johnissia S.**, was with another company when working with Yolanda at YB Consulting

"Yolanda's expertise and insight has been indispensable in planning and implementing of M Portrait Photography as a business. My regular consultations with with YB Consulting enabled me to move from theory to actually creating and starting my business plan within a matter of months. Yolanda's gentle, steadfast nature helped me in thinking out various business strategies and provided me with a competitive edge. <http://www.mportraitphotography.com>"

— **Monique H.**, was Yolanda's client

"Yolanda is a visionary that applies focus and detail to any project she undertakes. She listens to ideas and is able to develop them further with her knowledge and expertise. I appreciate that Yolanda takes the time to familiarize herself with industry standards in order to offer insight and recommendations that are competitive with the current market."

— **Courtney R.**, was Yolanda's client

"One of the most intellectual and educated people I have discussed all matters. No matter what the situation she's in she maintains professionalism and a sense of calmness and collective understanding that keeps an work environment productive and focused."

— **Brandon G.**, worked directly with Yolanda at NCIMED

"Yolanda is a very smart young woman and is extremely resourceful. She possess good work ethics and is an asset to the organization."

— **La-Tasha B.**, worked directly with Yolanda at NCIMED

"Yolanda is a great asset as a manager, in part because of her 360 degree viewpoint and keen observation of what needs to be done, coupled with the skills required to complete a project. It is always a pleasure to work with her, as she adds great value with her leadership and pleasant interpersonal skills. I unequivocally would recommend her."

— **Angela B.**, worked directly with Yolanda at NCIMED

"I have worked with Yolanda on several teams and projects at UNC Kenan Flagler. We have worked on study teams and in clubs such as the Alliance of Minority Business Students and MBA Student Government. Yolanda is driven, goal-oriented, very adaptable, and provides a constant supply of fresh ideas. She is also the consummate team player and is quite pleasing to work with. I strongly endorse Yolanda."

— **Shermon M.**, worked directly with Yolanda at UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

"I really enjoyed working with Yolanda in multiple groups. She is an excellent planner and executor -- detail-oriented, persistent, and a good communicator. She managed complex projects and organizational change in an environment with diverse constituencies. She would be a high performer in any organization."

— **Melina A.**, worked directly with Yolanda at UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School

"Yolanda's vision, leadership, clear guidance for the College Initiative Committee strengthened the between among NSBE Atlanta college and professional memberships. Also her work has recreated at the regional level."

— **Akilah M.**, worked directly with Yolanda at National Society Of Black Engineers

"I strongly recommend Yolanda Brown for any suitable leadership role in a deserving company or organization. Knowing Yolanda 5YR, I am very impressed with her polished, professional manner and her intense listening skills. As a NSBE-AE officer, Yolanda always conducted herself in a poised and executive manner. Her strengths are her intellect, tenacity and (world-class) networking skills."

— **Vanessa W.**, worked directly with Yolanda at National Society Of Black Engineers

[Contact Yolanda on LinkedIn](#)