



### 2010 Honorees

Richard B. Barr  
Ernie Boughman III  
Latrice Love Cooper  
Michael E. Edens  
Mandi Engram  
Tanya A. Gee  
Melissa Ann Smith Gentry  
Mikee Johnson  
Charles Kahn  
Laura A. Kiser  
Gretchen Lambert  
Cory E. Manning  
Brandi L. Parrish  
Matthew T. Richardson  
David A. Ross  
Tony Tam  
E. Craig Waites Jr.  
Genevieve N. Waller  
Deitra Mechelle Watson  
Tigerron Asim Wells

20 lives. 20 paths. 20 futures. Each year, The State showcases young Midlands professionals who have made their mark before age 40 and who look like they will continue their contributions for years to come.

This year's class carried on their families' legacies, built careers from humble beginnings and fought to defeat their fears. You'll meet a woman raised in foster homes who now has her own financial firm.

You'll find the son of restaurant owners who runs a successful hotel and the lawyer whose college jobs showed her she needed to help disadvantaged children. You'll read about charity organizers, coaches and business builders.

You'll discover how a woman turned a devastating moment in her life into a crusade and how a banker is recovering from the robber who nearly took his life.

No one said the path would be easy. But it's nice to get noticed for the journey.



Posted on Mon, Jan. 25, 2010

**Matthew T. Richardson**

**His job:** Attorney, Wyche Burgess Freeman & Parham

**Age:** 36

**Family:** Wife, Beth; three children, Jed, 3; James, 1 1/2; Raye Beth, 4 months

**Education:** Bachelor's degree in economics from Duke University; law degree from USC.

**Community/professional involvement:** Member of board of trustees, S.C. State University; board member, Palmetto Horizon Foundation, S.C. Appleseed Legal Justice Center and Central Carolina Community Foundation; treasurer, S.C. Association for Justice; Democratic National Committee; Liberty Fellowship

**His story:** The former USC law review editor clerked for then-S.C. Court of Appeals Judge Kaye Hearn and U.S. District Judge Michael Duffy. He joined Wyche Burgess Freeman & Parham, where he is now a litigation partner. While working on a legislative redistricting case, Richardson became interested in becoming more involved politically. Since then, he has taken on leadership roles in the Democratic Party, including serving as legal counsel and South Carolina's elected representative to the Democratic National Committee.

**What saying does he live by?** "My mother and father were both raised in small towns by parents who were strong examples of hard work and the desire to help those in need, and they've lived it too. In my family, we just call it 'desire.'"

**His life changed when ...** He became the first Eagle Scout in Barnwell Troop 392. "I realized setting a good example would be an important legacy and that there would always be younger boys who were trying to become men, watching and learning."

**How did he recover after failing at something?** "Early in my law practice, I represented a group of truck drivers whose company was intentionally underpaying them for the miles they were required to drive. I worked hard so they would have their day in court, but we lost.

"I could have stayed mad at myself or chosen easier cases after that loss, but the resilience of those hard-working truck drivers was inspiring - and I learned to keep fighting for what I believe is right."

**Do you separate your professional work from your political work?** "I try not to avoid politics in my professional career. I want my professional career to be consistent and integrated with the rest of my life. I also wouldn't want to try to avoid using my professional education and training in my political activities."

