

Illuminate the Rock



Rotary Club 99: Tuesday, March 21, 2023

About The Program: Earle Mayor Jaylen Smith with Little Rock Mayor Frank D. Scott, Jr.

On Tuesday, join us for a conversation with Earle Mayor Jaylen Smith, America's youngest elected Black mayor, and Club 99er Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott, Jr. on leadership and mentorship. The then-18-year-old Smith was elected in December to serve the city of Earle. From every major news outlets to Good Morning America and even a recent appearance on the Jennifer Hudson show, Smith's rise has garnered global attention for the small Delta town and its impressive new young mayor. Learn what motivated Smith - who is attending college while fulfilling his municipal responsibilities - to run and what he hopes to accomplish. You can read more about Mayor Smith in this *New York Times* profile: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/10/us/jaylen-smith-mayor-earle-arkansas.html>. Special thanks to Club 99er Whitnee Buellerwell of the Arkansas Municipal League for setting up this terrific program.



Mayor Jaylen Smith

Jaylen Smith, a native of Earle, Arkansas for 18 years, is the newly elected Mayor of the city of Earle, AR, elected in December 2022. Prior to becoming mayor, Smith served as President of Earle High School's Student Government Association; class president; a member of the career and technical student organization Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America, and acted as President of Student Voice. He is currently known and globally recognized as the youngest African American mayor in the history of the United States Government and this momentous achievement has opened doors for appearances on the Jennifer Hudson Show, the Towanna Murphy Show and the Roland Martin show, amongst others. Mayor Jaylen Smith currently lives in Earle, where he is surrounded by the love, respect and support of his family and a team of government colleagues. Faith and focus are priorities for Mayor Smith therefore he believes that individuals are never too young to want to make a difference in their communities and looks forward to working on building a better chapter for Earle during his term.

Mayor Frank Scott, Jr.

Frank Scott, Jr. began his second four-year term as Mayor of Little Rock on Jan. 1, 2023. During his time in office, Mayor Scott has worked toward uniting Little Rock's diverse neighborhoods through expanding our economy, creating new opportunities for educational growth for Little Rock's students, enhancing public safety and improving the quality of life and place in Arkansas' capital city. Mayor Scott has pledged to be Little Rock's Chief Growth Officer and has overseen the creation of more than 8000 jobs to date. Little Rock's population has grown to more than 203,000 residents as the Mayor pushes jobs growth and economic development, making Little Rock a catalyst for the new South. New developments, such as Trex, Trader Joe's, Flocchi, Topgolf and more highlight the momentum of this growing and thriving city. Under the Mayor's leadership, the City established the position of Chief Education Officer and helped implement a Community Schools model in six Little Rock School District schools. These schools integrate individualized student support services, expand and enrich learning opportunities, and operate as a neighborhood hub to provide other needed trainings and services for students' families. Mayor Scott worked with the Little Rock Board of Directors to make the Little Rock Police Department the highest-paid municipal force in the State, and to provide LRPD with the equipment and tools it needs to protect Little Rock neighborhoods including the implementation of full-time social workers within the LRPD. Mayor Scott has also worked to expand community programs to reduce violence as part of his holistic and comprehensive crime reduction strategy. With quality of life and place as a priority, Mayor Scott has established a task force to address downtown development and

density. Another task force is tasked with the goal of eliminating food deserts and ensuring all Little Rock residents have access to nutritious food. His renewed emphasis on parks and recreation has led to improvements at city parks and at the Little Rock Zoo, even as he works to identify and implement long-range strategies for War Memorial and Hindman parks. Mayor Scott, who was first sworn in as Mayor in January 2019, began his public-service career in the office of Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe, where he first served as Deputy Policy Director and later as Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. While on Beebe's staff, Scott continued his education, earning a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. That degree, with a concentration in finance, complemented Scott's undergraduate degree in Business Administration from the Fogelman College of Business at the University of Memphis. Determined to put his finance training to work, Scott accepted a position as a Community Banker with First Security Bank, giving him insight into the issues facing small businesses across the City. At the same time, he continued to devote a significant amount of time to serving both his City and State as a member of the Port of Little Rock Board of Directors and as a member of the Arkansas Highway Commission – experiences which gave Scott an understanding of the critical infrastructure that forms the backbone of any city. He currently serves as president of the African-American Mayors Association, a national organization representing African-American mayors from across the country. As an associate pastor, youth mentor, and professional, Mayor Scott lives out the values he learned growing up in Southwest Little Rock, the same area where he lives, today. He gives back to the City that invested in him and reminds young people regularly that values are the foundation of a purpose-filled life.

Did You Miss Business and Professional Leader of the Year Award Recipient Scott Ford & Our Annual College Scholarship Presentations?

Our Business and Professional Leader of the Year Committee Chair, Past President Elizabeth Small, introduced Scott T. Ford of Westrock Coffee as our 2023 Business and Professional Leader of the Year honoree. Scott joined his father, Joe Ford, as only the second father-son duo to receive this award after Jack and Warren Stephens. Following our tradition, President Peacock even awarded Scott with a Paul Harris Fellow recognition.

Scott began his remarks by saying he was pleased to take the opportunity in his hometown of Little Rock to tell the "real story" of Westrock Coffee. He directed most of his comments to Rotary's college scholarship recipients. Westrock is now the largest provider of other companies' coffee in the country. They are building the largest roast-to-ready-to-drink coffee facility in the world in the former Kimberly Clark plant in Conway, where the company will produce coffee for every name-brand provider. With plans for more than 1,000 Arkansans in its Conway, Little Rock and North Little Rock facilities, Westrock is now available in 35 countries and does business with millions of women farmers in Rwanda and other countries, providing a sustainable market at a fair price for their coffee beans. Ford credits his success to the people around him: "It's the people you do life with that matter! Surround yourself with people that will stick; mentor others and seek mentors for yourself." Watch the full program video [here](#) and the Ford Family video [here](#).







College Scholarships Day College Scholarships Committee Chair Jay Barth also oversaw the awarding of more than 15 scholarships for our area higher education institutions: UA Little Rock, UA Pulaski Tech, Philander Smith College, Shorter College and Arkansas Baptist. Amazingly, our club has given out more than 230 scholarships worth more than \$310,000 to students over the years.

Introducing Kim Kirkman!

We also welcomed our newest member, Kim Kirkman, sponsored by Karen Flake. Welcome to Club 99, Kim!

Upcoming Programs and Events

March

21 Earle Mayor Jaylen Smith with Little Rock Mayor Frank D. Scott, Jr.

28 Little Rock Police Awards

April

4 Heartland Forward's Ross DeVol

11 SOCIAL: Arkansas Travelers Opening Night Reception (NO NOON MEETING)

SAVE THE DATE: May 23 / 75th Anniversary Reception for Ottenheimer International Scholars Program at Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts (NO NOON MEETING)

Zoom Login for March 21, 2023

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86993833514?pwd=ZEFxVm10SEovRER2azBNb2MyenJ2OT09>

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Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbwftLUPfG>

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