

Chandra R. Thomas – Assistant Editor and Writer, Atlanta Magazine

“My career is an extension of who I am. I see the dire need to have positive images of people of color, especially African Americans in the media. It is my personal commitment to bring a perspective that is often overlooked.” Such is the passion of Chandra Thomas, assistant editor and staff writer of *Atlanta Magazine*. While the passion she has for her work is exemplary, what is even more amazing is that she found her passion and her career path purely by accident.

Chandra’s career may have never been realized had it not been for her 11th grade English teacher. During her junior year of high school, Chandra was strongly urged by her English teacher to join the high school newspaper staff. She joined, albeit reluctantly, and was soon learning basic journalism techniques and gaining editorial experience. Eventually, her newspaper advisor recommended that she attend a summer journalism workshop at Clark Atlanta University. She soon found that journalism came naturally to her and she decided to pursue a Bachelor’s in journalism at Clark Atlanta University.

Now, as assistant editor and staff writer of *Atlanta Magazine*, the New Orleans, LA native is using her passion to bring a different perspective to mainstream media. “I try to put humanity into the story; these are real people. The media leaves at the end of the day but the people are really homeless; they’ve lost their child, etc...” In addition to her work with the magazine, Chandra co-founded “TalkBLACK Atlanta” – a discussion group that meets monthly to discuss issues relevant to young Black professionals. She also serves as a mentor to young people who are interested in a career in journalism.

Chandra’s recipe for success includes having strong family support, surrounding herself with dedicated individuals and learning about the value of networking. “[Networking] is what’s so great about the National Urban League Young Professionals. The Atlanta Urban League Young Professionals provides opportunities to meet, network and get to know one another on a professional and personal level.”

On Civic Engagement

“Sometimes we think our only responsibility is to ourselves. As African American professionals, we need to really be serious and realize that it really does take a village to raise a child, and we need to be serious about giving back in at least one way. It is important for all African Americans, particularly those who have had access to education and opportunity, to give back to our community to ensure that we help each other succeed – following the ‘Each One, Teach One’ philosophy.”