

Birgit Smith Burton

Birgit Smith Burton is the Executive Director of AADO, the African American Development Officers Network, which she founded at Georgia Tech in 1999 to provide professional development, education, employment support, mentorship, and networking opportunities for fundraisers of color. She is a well-regarded speaker on the topics of fundraising and diversity and has authored articles on diversity in the fundraising profession, co-authored the book, *The Philanthropic Covenant with Black America*, contributed to the book *Five Minutes for Fundraising, A Collection of Expert Advice*, and tells her personal story in the book *Collecting Courage*, which shares the lived experiences of Black women and men working in the nonprofit and charitable space (published fall 2020). During her 26-year career at Georgia Tech she led her team in raising over \$500M from private philanthropic foundations to support programs, scholarships, and capital projects. Birgit was selected to participate in the first cohort of Leading Women @ Tech and was a recipient of the team award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Program Development for the Marcus Center for Therapeutic Cell Characterization and Manufacturing.

Birgit has served on the global board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) for nearly a decade and has the distinction of being the first African American woman in AFP's 62-year history to be voted chair of the AFP Global Board. Birgit received the Opportunity and Inclusion Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education which recognized her leadership in fostering inclusion and diversity within the fundraising profession. In 2020 the R.I.S.E. Fund was established in Birgit's honor with a mission to advance women of color in fundraising by providing Resources, Inspiration, Support, and Education.

Birgit chairs the A.E. Lowe Grice Scholarship Fund, serves on the advisory council for Somos El Poder (A National Latinx Fundraising Institute), chairs the board of the Ahmaud Arbery Foundation, and is on the advisory committee for Women of Color in Fundraising and Philanthropy (WOC). She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Birgit holds a bachelor's degree in media communications from Medaille University in Buffalo, New York and serves on its board of Trustees. (updated 2-20-23)

