

Picking Up Pace

I have always loved to ride horses and started riding at an early age. By the time I was six years old, I was riding by myself but was told not to go faster than a walk. Once, when out for a ride with my Aunt Margaret, I could not take the slow pace any longer and maneuvered the horse under a tree, which caused my aunt to lose her scarf. When she dismounted to get the scarf, I gave the horse a swat, causing him to gallop away at nearly a dead run with me on his back and my Aunt Margaret left in the dust.

David S. Huntley is accustomed to “naysayers.” But the memory of his father helps keep him grounded and on a steady course.

Huntley’s father was the inspiration for his becoming an attorney. “He was drawn to laws and rules that were often not applied equally across various groups,” Huntley says. “Consequently, I chose a law degree.” “I chose to become a business and transactional lawyer because I believe that economic empowerment is the natural evolution from the Civil Rights Movement,” he says.

Huntley credits a former general counsel at AT&T, Jim Ellis, for introducing him to career opportunities beyond the law. Thanks to that prod, he is now senior vice president of customer information services (CIS) for the telecommunications conglomerate. His CIS responsibilities include a combination of two business units—Operations Services and Public Communications.

The move from legal to operations has proven to be Huntley’s most significant career challenge to date. “While I personally believed that I had the skills and knowledge to be successful in a non-lawyer role, I faced a great deal of skepticism, both internally and externally, in making the move,” he explains.

“Since taking on his current role in July 2005,” explains AT&T group president Ray Wilkins, “David has completely reinvented the organization. In two years, he has transformed a 13-state wireline/wireless system, and the company is on track to have a fully revamped, considerably more efficient system in place by the end of 2007.” Wilkins, a 1997 Eagle Award winner, boasts that, without Huntley’s vision, the transformation would never have occurred, “let alone in less than two years.”



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Persistent and unwavering, in addition to his success at AT&T, Huntley can point to countless situations in which he knew he could succeed—and did. During his sophomore year at Southern Methodist University, friends, faculty, and administrators told Huntley that he could not win election as student-body president. Nevertheless, a structured, winning campaign led him to the presidency—as a write-in candidate—and he became the first African-American student-body president in the history of the college.

Huntley prides himself at being a change agent. An active member of Community NETwork, AT&T's African-American-focused employee resource group, Huntley has served as a speaker at numerous events and has mentored fellow members. He has also provided counsel to the organization regarding the objectives of the group's direction.

Outside of AT&T, Huntley stays fit and grounded by running. "I have completed two marathons and endured two knee surgeries," he says. The memory of his father keeps him honest. "Whenever I would achieve something of significance, he would always say, 'But only for the grace of God, son...but for the grace of God...'"

Among his significant achievements, Huntley counts serving as counsel for a small church in San Antonio. "I helped the church develop its organizational documents and aided in the negotiations that ultimately led to the building of a new church facility," he explains.

Whether he is involved with the United Way Texas Gulf Coast, Boy Scouts of America, or the Texas Bar Foundation, which funds deserving programs throughout the state related to law and the legal profession, Huntley remains stalwart in his work. He believes that his desire to be the very best in his personal life is the cornerstone for shaping his business philosophy.

CareerFOCUS Magazine[™] and the National Eagle Leadership Institute[®] salute 2007 Eagle Award winner David S. Huntley.

Nominating Company

AT&T Inc.

Current Position

Senior Vice President,
Customer Information Services

Professional Milestones

- Trustee, Texas Bar Foundation
- Community NETwork—AT&T's African-American employee resource group
- State Bar of Texas, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and San Antonio Bar Association

Community Leadership

- Executive Board of Directors, Greater Houston Partnership
- Board of Directors, Memorial Hermann Hospital System
- Board of Directors, Boy Scouts of America

Leadership Principle

Advance preparation and attention to detail.

Education/Training

- Juris Doctorate, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University
- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Southern Methodist University

Birthplace

San Antonio, TX

Current Home

San Antonio, TX

The Leadership Promise at AT&T

AT&T employs the most talented individuals from all backgrounds and perspectives to provide products and services that meet its customers' needs. The company realizes that diverse, talented, and dedicated people are key to a company's success.

AT&T has significantly increased leadership-development opportunities for women and people of color through initiatives such as the Leadership Development Program (LDP). This program is AT&T's flagship leadership-development program for high achievers with outstanding leadership potential. Designed for recent college graduates, LDP focuses on building a strong and diverse leadership bench across the enterprise through a rotational program. Since 1988, hundreds of employees have successfully completed the program. Nearly half of the participants are women, and nearly half are people of color—demonstrating AT&T's commitment to diversity.