

KeyWay Report: Jay Morgan

President Chris Hempfling presented **Mr. Jay Morgan**, **founder of J.L. Morgan Company**, a public affairs, solution-oriented company working with corporations and in community development around core societal issues as our speaker. Jay Morgan provided a candid and demystifying overview of what lobbyists do. In the Georgia General Assembly, there are 180 House members and 56 Senate members. Most non-committee-chair legislators share an administrative assistant with four or five colleagues and may have one intern. Given that nearly 2,000 bills were introduced in the last two-year legislative session, legislators simply do not have the capacity to research and evaluate every piece of legislation on their own.

Jay described his role as providing legislators with accurate, complete, and digestible information — what he called "bite-sized chunks" — to help them make informed decisions. He emphasized that his credibility is his most valuable asset; providing incorrect or incomplete information would permanently damage his ability to be effective. He also noted that lobbyists must be aware not only of the direct impact of legislation but also its unintended consequences.

He also explained the term "lobbyist" itself originated during Abraham Lincoln's presidency in the 1860s when people seeking government jobs would gather in the lobby of the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., waiting for an opportunity to present their case to the President or his staff – hence these job seekers became known as "lobbyists".

Jay emphasized Georgia is experiencing one of its most consequential election years in recent memory. With open seats for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State, and with **Senator John Ossoff** in his first reelection campaign on the ballot, the political landscape is unusually fluid. Jay noted that approximately 74 days remain before the general election, with early voting beginning in roughly 55 days.

On the Democratic side, **Keisha Lance Bottoms** emerged from

MEETINGS

August is Membership and New Club Development Month

8/28 General Meeting

BIRTHDAYS

9/3 Uku Urb
9/16 Jennifer Fields
9/21 Terri Copeland

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

ROTARY ONLINE

<https://atlantawestendrotary.org>
<https://rotary6900.org/>
<https://rotary.org/>

ROTARY CLUB OF ATLANTA WEST END

Fridays, 12:15 pm
Georgia Tech Hotel & Conference Center*
800 Spring St NW
Atlanta, GA 30308

LEADERSHIP

President	Christopher Hempfling
President-Elect	Rodney Fields
Immediate PP	Victoria Seals, PhD
Vice President	Rodney Fields
Treasurer	Melanie Sewell
Secretary	Neil Shorthouse
Public Image	CJ Stewart

the primary without a runoff — the first time in 20 years that more Democrats voted in a primary than Republicans. Notably, 30% of those Democratic primary voters had not voted in the previous three elections, signaling strong enthusiasm. On the Republican side, **Rick Jackson** ran a relatively low-cost campaign and emerged as the nominee despite having no prior electoral experience. Jay emphasized that both candidates are untested at the statewide level, making this a uniquely unpredictable race.

Jay strongly encouraged members to educate themselves and their networks about down-ballot races, which will receive far less media coverage despite their significant impact. He also highlighted the importance of becoming poll workers and voting early to avoid Election Day complications such as polling location changes, which can disenfranchise voters who have already invested time and money to reach their assigned location. And in order to overcome possible confusion about one's registration, Jay recommended early voting, because if there's a problem with one's registration there's ample time to get it resolved – which could be very hard to do on election day.

C.J. Stewart asked Jay about the skills Black youth in the West End should be learning to become lobbyists. Jay recommended getting involved in political campaigns or working in the General Assembly as a starting point. He emphasized communication skills — particularly the willingness to make phone calls rather than relying on email or text — as essential. He also noted that demonstrating initiative, a willingness to fail and learn, and real-world experience in advocacy or government roles are what clients and employers look for when hiring lobbyists.

There were questions about General assembly funding postsecondary education, and the value of technical education versus traditional four-year college degrees, and the burden of student loan debt. Jay argued that colleges and universities have an obligation to counsel students on career outcomes and that there is growing legislative interest in holding institutions accountable for post-graduation employment statistics.

By contrast, Atlanta Technical College was highlighted as a model of effective workforce development. AWER treasurer **Melanie Sewell**, CFO of Atlanta Technical College, explained that most students attend at little to no cost due to the HOPE Grant (requiring only a 2.0 GPA) combined with Pell Grant funding. The college maintains dedicated staff to track student progress and

ensure job placement upon graduation, with a near-100% placement rate. Certificate programs have also proven highly successful, allowing students to enter the workforce without completing a full degree. The college's aviation program, for example, produces graduates who earn six-figure starting salaries. Further, they are graduating with zero student loan debt.

C.J. Stewart announced exciting news about a recently completed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Atlanta to build a state-of-the-art, multi-million-dollar baseball and tennis complex in the Bankhead neighborhood, located near the Zone 1 police precinct. The project is estimated to cost between \$15 and \$18 million and will be the first significant investment in youth infrastructure in that community in over 50 years. **City Councilman Byron Amos** issued a proclamation in support of the project.

Respectfully submitted,

C.J. Stewart, Jared Evans, Neil Shorthouse

Free CPR Instructor Training for Rotarians

Two years ago a member of the Rotary Club of North Fulton suffered a cardiac arrest while playing pickleball. Bystanders immediately performed CPR and used an AED, and their quick action saved his life. That experience inspired their club to set a goal of teaching CPR to 1,000 people in 12 months. They have now trained more than 1,400 people, and want to expand this lifesaving program throughout District 6900.

Thanks to a generous Wellstar grant, Rotarians can now receive free CPR/AED/Choking instructor training and become certified to teach these skills in our communities. The training takes approximately four hours and **no medical background is required**.

Upcoming instructor training dates (Wellstar Hospital in North Fulton):

- September 26 — 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- October 24 — 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- November 14 — 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

If you are interested in becoming an instructor or know another Rotarian who might be, please reach out to Marc Gelber of the Rotary Club of North Fulton. His email is marc@gelbers.com and his phone number is 770-856-9508.

Let's put a lifesaver in every Rotary community across District 6900. Thank you for your help and support!

L.E.A.D. Center For Youth's Community Champions Celebration

L.E.A.D. Center For Youth is hosting its annual Community Champions Awards Celebration in partnership with the Atlanta Braves Foundation on Sunday, September 27, 2026. Join L.E.A.D. from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM as we honor our exceptional student-athletes and supporters who make our work possible. You can purchase tickets at this link or by scanning the QR code below.

All event proceeds will directly support sport-based youth development and programming at L.E.A.D. Center for Youth, empowering our young athletes to thrive both on and off the field.

A promotional poster for the L.E.A.D. Center For Youth's Community Champions Celebration. The poster features a group photo of diverse young athletes and adults, some in red Atlanta Braves jerseys, standing in front of a backdrop. The text on the poster includes the L.E.A.D. logo, the event title "COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS Celebration", the presenter "PRESENTED BY: ATLANTA BRAVES FOUNDATION", and the event details "Join us in honoring our exceptional student-athletes and the supporters who make our work possible. SUNDAY SEPT. 27, 2-4PM SCAN TO REGISTER". A QR code is provided for registration. The poster is decorated with blue and yellow diagonal lines at the top and bottom.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS
Celebration

PRESENTED BY: ATLANTA BRAVES FOUNDATION

Join us in honoring our exceptional student-athletes and the supporters who make our work possible.

**SUNDAY
SEPT. 27, 2-4PM**
SCAN TO REGISTER

Agenda, Connections, & Four-Way Test

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation & Pledge
3. Introduction of Guests
4. Tasse Trivia
5. DEI Moment
6. Announcements
7. Program/Speaker
8. The Four-Way Test

9. Adjournment

Sign up to be a program chair in the new Rotary Year [here](#) today!

A Little Dues, A Lot of Good

Supporting District 6900 starts with staying current on your district dues. Keeping your dues up to date ensures we can continue providing leadership development, youth programs, district events, club support, and the many resources that help our clubs thrive.

THE FOUR-WAY TEST of the things we think, say or do



first Is it the TRUTH?

second Is it FAIR to all concerned?

third Will it build GOOD WILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

fourth Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?