

**MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 2015**

“Workshop Presenters Clarify Comments On City Presentation”

In light of today’s article by Lilly Rockwell of the Statesmen, posted to CityHall.blog covering the City of Austin’s training session on Women in local government, presenters Jonathan K. Allen and Dr. Miya Burt-Stewart said Wednesday that many of their comments were taken out of context and the presentation was never intended to diminish or minimize the knowledge, skills, and contributions of women in the field of local government, nor detract from other minority groups that make great contributions across a spectrum of professional fields. During the presentation, the presenters discussed the growing trend of women assuming top leadership positions in local government across the nation and especially in Texas and Florida. Both Allen and Burt-Stewart tried to convey that emerging and established public administrators needed to be prepared to adjust their traditional leadership, communication, and management styles in order to be effective and responsive public administrators in the future. During the workshop presentation, Allen and Burt-Stewart shared useful information as it relates to professional development activities and encouraged dialogue identifying best management practices in dealing with certain trends in public administration. The Blog did not fully mention that the presentation covered other pertinent and key points as follows:

1. Stages of Team/Group Development
2. Keys to Effective Communication
3. Identifying and Improving One’s Communication and Leadership Style

The duo wanted to clarify their position on comments made before the City of Austin’s Affinity Groups, about women’s increasing presence in leadership positions. The following is a joint statement from Mr. Allen and Dr. Burt-Stewart:

We are saddened by the negative reaction to a positive group discussion. It is important that as the global trend of Women in Leadership positions grow, that we as leaders are open to professional development opportunities which aid and prepare us for next level participation. Any interpretation that we do not support and appreciate the growing number of women executives and elected officials in both the public and private sector is absolutely not true. Furthermore, any notion that our presentation sought to outwardly present or show a disregard for minorities or any other groups that are affiliated with the City of Austin is a clear misnomer and not representative of who we are as presenters and professionals.

If our overall intent and message was not clear during the presentation, we sincerely apologize for any miscommunication. Our public presentation and comments were not preapproved and/or endorsed by any City Official at the City of Austin and in no way did we want to offend any person(s) or group(s) within the City of Austin and/or the Austin Community. As professionals, we are always open to constructive criticism and corrections on our performance and presentations in the field of public administration. Again, we extend a heartfelt apology and it is our hope that any misinterpretations are not attributed to nor reflected upon the City of Austin, its Mayor, Council Members, City Manager, or City Staff.

This is the only communication that will be shared and presented by Mr. Jonathan K. Allen and Dr. Miya Burt-Stewart concerning their presentation before the City of Austin’s Affinity Groups.

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