

**2017 Keynote Speaker**

Dr. Gloria Burgess is Seattle’s TOP inspirational speaker. Triumphing over extreme poverty, racism, and sexism, she shows that your life circumstances do not have to predict your destiny.

An acclaimed international speaker, Gloria Burgess has presented keynotes to tens of thousands of people in nearly 30 countries and has shared the stage with luminaries such as Dr. Phil McGraw, Marianne Williamson, Dr. Bernie Siegel, Jean Houston, John O’Donohue, Marci Shimoff, and Immaculée Ilibagiza. She has also been featured on numerous television and radio programs, including NPR, British Public Radio, and Seattle’s renowned Dr. Pat Show.

Her clients include Microsoft, Starbucks, Boeing, MSNBC, Farmers Insurance, AT&T, Russell Financial, Providence Health Systems, American Business Women’s Association, Executive Women in Texas Government, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, University of Southern California, International Coach Federation, Embassy of South Africa in Switzerland, National Parliament of Kenya, Women’s International Network, and AGLOW International.

Gloria Burgess’s most recent work includes two books on leadership in the [Building Leadership Bridges](http://www.ila-net.org/Publications/BLB/) series and [Dare to Wear Your Soul on the Outside](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0470241837). Focused on values-driven leadership, Gloria has received high praise from leadership gurus Dr. Warren Bennis and Peter Block.

**Creating a bridge...**

Gloria Burgess loves nothing more than inspiring others to create a bridge from what was and what is to what can be… and she’s dedicated her entire life to doing just that.

As an inspirational speaker, seminar leader, and executive coach, Gloria engages individuals and teams in finding the vital core of their creative genius. And she weaves together her own personal legacy using the threads of authenticity, creativity, soulfulness, and cultural inclusion.

**From what was…**

The legacy Gloria Burgess lives honors the dual legacies of her father, Earnest McEwen, Jr., and his benefactor, Nobel Laureate and Pulitzer prize-winning author William Faulkner.

Gloria’s father dreamed of a better life for his family. More than anything, he wanted to go to college. Fueled by his determination and faith in God, he courageously spoke to others about his dream—even though this was a dangerous thing to do in the segregated South.

While working as a janitor at Ol’ Miss, he spoke to a professor about his burning desire to go to college, setting in motion a series of events that would change his life for all time. One of those significant events was meeting William Faulkner.

Faulkner helped Gloria’s father attend college, paying for his tuition and expenses with no strings attached. His generous financial gift allowed her father to go to college, move out of the South, and eventually emerge from poverty.

**To what is and what can be…**

In her life and work, Gloria Burgess has been blessed to reach pinnacle after pinnacle. The road has not always been easy. But where others saw obstacles, she saw opportunity. Through it all, she triumphed over adversity, persevered, and excelled.

During her career in high tech, Gloria broke through the glass and cement ceilings to become the first Black female executive in the computer industry. After 23 years in the corporate world, she segued to launch her own business. Although her employer offered her a generous sum of venture capital to start a high tech business, she turned it down. Instead, she started a management and leadership consulting company. And to address the pressing need to equip urban youth with leadership and technical skills, she founded The Lift Every Voice Foundation.

A pioneer and innovator in leadership and the arts, Gloria conceived and coined the term legacy consciousness many years ago. She has devoted her life to shifting our understanding that legacy is not merely about ending well. But like a marvelous melody, legacy unfolds moment by moment and we leave our footprint wherever we go. Gloria teaches us to become conscious stewards for our own sake and for the sake of our children, our children’s children, and the generations to come.

*(Bio from* [*www.gloriaburgess.com*](http://www.gloriaburgess.com) *04/21/17)*