

Jay Bailey

Leader . Builder . Advisor . Girl Dad



James M. “Jay” Bailey is a globally respected leader, entrepreneur, and advisor whose work has helped define how inclusive innovation and long-term institution-building are done at scale. He is known for helping leaders make sense of complexity and translate vision into lasting impact. Jay serves as President and CEO of the H.J. Russell Innovation Center for Entrepreneurs (RICE), the world’s largest entrepreneurial hub dedicated to developing and scaling Black-owned businesses. Under his leadership, RICE supports hundreds of entrepreneurs, sustains more than 4,100 jobs, and generates \$577 million in annual economic impact across Metro Atlanta. Rooted in community and culture, the Center’s approach has informed leaders and institutions across the country and internationally, using entrepreneurship as a practical tool to build durable, place-based economies.

Across more than three decades, Jay has worked in moments where decisions carry real consequence, when the path forward is not obvious and the cost of getting it wrong is high. He has helped raise more than \$100 million to support catalytic initiatives and organizational growth, and his work has contributed to billions in economic impact through entrepreneurship, job creation, and place-based investment. His leadership is defined by judgment: knowing what to build, how to steward it, and what must last.

Jay’s work has been recognized at the highest levels. His leadership has been acknowledged by three U.S. Presidents, including being named one of only eight Americans honored at the White House as a Champion of Change: Following in the Footsteps of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He is a three-time TED speaker and has been named a Visionary by Black Enterprise Magazine - recognition reserved for leaders shaping the future of business, innovation, and opportunity. These distinctions are not the work itself; they reflect trust earned over time.

Beyond executive leadership, Jay’s influence extends across civic, educational, and philanthropic institutions, as well as land stewardship and conservation. He is the founder of the Black Land Institute, launching in 2026, focused on restoring the connection between land, ownership, and generational power. Across every role, his work is guided by a defining belief: leadership is not just about success, but about significance, about doing work that truly matters and leaves something meaningful behind.

When Jay Bailey takes the stage or enters the room, he brings perspective earned through practice...not theory. Audiences don’t just hear ideas; they gain clarity. They leave better equipped to think long-term, navigate complexity, and build with intention and confidence in what comes next.

He lives in Southwest Atlanta with his wife, NBC News and Dateline correspondent Blayne Alexander, and their daughters, Sage and Skylar.