

# Juanita P. Baranco, Esq.

Juanita Baranco is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Baranco Automotive Group, currently consisting of Baranco Buick Pontiac-GMC in Lilburn, Mercedes-Benz of Buckhead and **smartCenter** Buckhead. She and her husband, Gregory Baranco founded the first Baranco car dealership in the metropolitan Atlanta area in 1978. Mrs. Baranco, along with her husband and former Ambassador Andrew Young opened Mercedes Benz of Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia in June of 2003.

Born in Washington, D.C., Mrs. Baranco was raised in Shreveport, Louisiana, where she earned her Bachelor of Science and Juris Doctorate degrees from Louisiana State University.

A member of the American Bar Association and the State Bar Associations of Georgia and Louisiana, Mrs. Baranco enjoyed a successful career in law – including a turn as assistant attorney general for the State of Georgia – before she and her husband founded the first Baranco dealership in the metropolitan Atlanta area in 1978.

Mrs. Baranco has been involved extensively in civic and community affairs, with a significant portion of her time and energy dedicated to education-related topics.

In addition to teaching business courses at local middle and high schools, she served as chairman of the DeKalb County Education Task Force. She was a member of the Georgia State Board of Education from 1985-1991, she was named by former Georgia Gov. Zell Miller to serve on the Board of Regents, and in 1995 she became its first African-American female chair. During her tenure, the board experienced increased national preeminence for its sweeping reforms and innovative higher education policies.

Mrs. Baranco also served as chairman of the Education Committee for the 1996 Olympics and established a scholarship program for high school seniors seeking careers as automobile technicians. Currently, she sits on the board of trustees for Clark Atlanta University.

An active business leader, Mrs. Baranco has been featured on several occasions in *Georgia Trend* magazine's annual list of the "100 Most Influential Georgians." Her business appointments have included director positions with the Federal Reserve of Atlanta and the John H. Harland Co. She also served as a member of the Governor's Human Relations Committee and on Clark Atlanta University's National Business Advisory Board, a board member of Georgia Power, the Atlanta and DeKalb Chambers of Commerce and as a director for First Union Bank.

Currently, Mrs. Baranco serves on the board of directors of Southern Company and Cox Radio. In addition, she serves as a board member of the Sickle Cell Foundation of Georgia and as Chairman of the Board at Clark Atlanta University.

Mrs. Baranco has received numerous awards for her business and community activities, including recognition by the Dow Jones Company for entrepreneurial excellence; the first Trumpet Award from Turner Broadcasting System for entrepreneurial excellence; Entrepreneur of the Year by the Atlanta Business League; the DECCA Award from the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*; the YWCA's Women of Achievement Award; and the Atlanta History Center's Defining Women in Atlanta Life Award. Mrs. Baranco also has been featured in *Essence* Magazine as one of Atlanta's women on the move. In 2001 she was inducted into the Georgia State University Business Hall of Fame.

Recognition in the automotive industry has included the AHFC Counsel of Sales Excellence Award (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006); the Acura Precision Team Award; the General Motors Mark of Excellence Award and finalist status for the 2003 *Time Magazine* Quality Dealer Award. Juanita Baranco is a member of the Georgia Automobile Dealers Association (GADA) and the Metro Atlanta Automobile Dealers Association (MAADA).

She is active in her community through her support of the Scottsdale Child Development Center, Project Impact DeKalb County, Partners in Education, the Pierre Toussaint House and the Saints Peter & Paul Church. She also is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and serves as a mentor and role model for young women in her community.

Mrs. Baranco and her husband, Gregory, live in Lithonia. They have four adult children.