

## ***Interview with Executive Loft 2.0***

### **Tell us a little bit about yourself. Name, hometown, passions:**

*My name is Jermaine Jones, I'm 40 years old from Davenport, Iowa. I moved to the hair industry mecca, Atlanta in 2005 after completing Barber and Styling School. My passions include:*

- *Being creative with branding and executing a vision*
- *Making others feel good*
- *Building financial freedom through generational wealth*

### **What is your business and why did you start?**

*The Barber Industry. I've always been pretty artsy. My parents didn't believe in spending money on hair grooming so I started grooming myself around the age of 13 and was able to increase my skillset through trial/error and repetition. That turned into me eventually cutting my friends' hair for free.*

### **How long have you been in business?**

*I've been a Master Barber for 16 years and a business owner for 3 years.*

### **What is your brands story?**

*We lost a big influencer in the hip-hop community, Nipsey Hustle. His famous quote is "The Marathon Continues". That really inspired me to think beyond barbering and focus more on the business. My mindset shifted to a quest for financial freedom. I currently have two locations; the first is a four chair suite which I rent chairs to multiple barbers. I also have a single space where I'm able to offer more services to my clients and provide a one-on-one environment to help them feel comfortable in this pandemic we're currently in.*

### **What does being a small black business in ATL mean to you?**

*Being a small black business owner has given me a sense of freedom. Freedom to serve the community, be creative in building my brand, and being in position to network with my clients who are small black business owners as well.*

**How has COVID-19 impacted your business?**

*Covid has definitely made an impact on my business. When the pandemic first hit, I had to shutdown for six weeks. During that period, I began to brainstorm ways to ensure that I'm able to maintain my clientele as well as the barbers I had on staff in a time of the unknown. I eventually made the decision to open the second space. Although initially it took a great toll on me financially, it forced me to branch out and make my brand more exclusive and in turn has enhanced my clientele.*

**Do you think the adaptations you made will remain in a post COVID world?**

*Most definitely. I will continue to maintain high sanitation practices, temperature checks, and social distance as much as possible.*

**Do you currently have any initiatives for giving back to your local community?**

*I would love to be able to serve the community by being a mentee to an aspiring barber by sponsoring some classes so they're able to obtain their barber's license. I would also love to be a part of any community drives where I'm able to donate my grooming services.*