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Annie: Hi friends! Welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs. Happy Martin Luther King Jr. Day. I'm really humbled and grateful to have time with you on a day when we get to remember and honor the life of Dr. King and the inspiring work he championed for racial reconciliation. And we have got a great show in store for you.

But before we get to that, did you hear the news I got to share last week? We announced some of the special guests for the upcoming That Sounds Fun Tour. We announced most of them. And this lineup y'all, I could not be more excited to see y'all and to get to have live podcast conversations with these incredible guests in the room with you.

You can get your tickets and find out all the details at anniefdowns.com/events. And that link is in the show notes below if you need it whenever you are not driving or when you hop off your treadmill.

And before we dive into this conversation, I want to take a moment and share about one of our incredible partners. This podcast is sponsored by [BetterHelp Online Therapy](http://BetterHelpOnlineTherapy). We talk about BetterHelp a lot on this show. And this month we're discussing some of the stigmas around mental health.

A lot of people think it's fine to wait until things have gotten seriously tough before connecting with a therapist or that admitting you need to help means there's something wrong with you. And that's simply not the case. Counseling is incredibly helpful for preventing things from becoming unbearable and for maintaining our mental health even when things feel more steady. That's what I found in my ongoing relationship with my therapist.

BetterHelp is customized online therapy that offers video, phone, and even live chat sessions with your therapist. So you don't have to see anyone on camera if you don't want to. It's much more affordable than in-person therapy and you can be matched with a therapist and under 48 hours. Give it a try and see why over 2 million people have used BetterHelp Online Therapy.

This podcast is sponsored by BetterHelp and That Sounds Fun friends get 10% off their first month at betterhelp.com/thatsoundsfun. That's betterhelp.com/thatsoundsfun.

Intro: Today on the show I get to talk with Shana Berkeley. Okay, my friend and one of your favorites too, Ellie Holcomb introduced Shana and I a couple weeks ago and I knew right away she was someone that y'all would all want to be friends with too.

She's a fellow Atlanta native who's now here in Nashville. She's the executive director of Corner to Corner, which is an amazing organization that empowers their neighbors to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. You'll hear more about what they do in this conversation with Shana.

As if that doesn't keep her busy enough, she also owns The Fashion Chase, yes, The Fashion Chase, which teaches women how to express their creativity in a corporate world through fashion and style. Shana is passionate, fun, and brilliant. I cannot wait for you to get to know her. So here's my conversation with Shana Berkeley.

[00:02:50] <music>

Annie: Shana, Welcome to That Sounds Fun.

Shana: Thank you. I'm so excited to be here. It's going to be fun.

Annie: Oh, duh.

Shana: It's going to be the best podcast they hear all year.

Annie: That is right. We're starting them off early in January.

Shana: Early and strong.

Annie: That's right.

Shana: That's how we do it.

Annie: That's right. Here's what I know. The world doesn't know you and I just became friends last month. And I was like, "I've got to have her on the podcast." I need everyone to know you.

Shana: Oh, how hard is that? Oh my gosh. You know what? Your reputation precedes you. I have a friend who is also a former staff member. She ended up moving to Texas named Yasmine Williams Woods. And she is a motivational speaker and a graduate of the academy. And so when she saw our picture, she texted me and was like, "Oh,

my gosh, I love Annie." And I was like, "You know what? I love her too." So now we have more things in common.

Annie: That's right.

Shana: I'm excited to be here, but even more just excited to get to know you and chat with you.

Annie: I know. Me too. Let's talk about our mutual friend who introduced us, Ellie Holcomb.

Shana: Yes, Ellie!

Annie: Ain't she the best?

Shana: Ain't she the best? I feel like everybody says that. She's amazing.

Annie: She's like a sprite or an angel or a... She's a phelio. She's just not a person. She's not a person. She's better than-

Shana: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah.

Shana: I mean, you know, you can tell when God has really favored and just given parts of Himself to somebody fully. And I think that she definitely just, you know, she sweats love and grace and joy and all these things that God wants us to have. And also questions and lament.

And sometimes you get people who are either all bubbly and you're like, "Wait, do you see what's going on in the world?" or people who are really downtrodden and can't see the beauty in the small things. And I think she's one of those people who's like a rose planted in the concrete. They're going to grow and they're going to give beauty to things around themselves. Super grateful to have met her and all the things she's doing, for not only Corner to Corner but her and us friends.

Annie: How did y'all meet?

Shana: We met through Will, our former executive director who's now co-founder of Corner to Corner, a nonprofit here in Nashville. I knew Ellie and kind of just knew around. She heard about the work that we were doing. And so he was like, "Y'all

have to meet." And when we met it was like instant friendship. He left, we went to a meeting, we chatted for an hour.

And it's really funny that we on the surface don't have a whole lot in common. You know, she's a musician, she has children. I like country music well enough, right? I live in Nashville, so I have a little touch of it. But we just have so much, you know, internally, things that we connect on and just excited about the work of the Lord and asking questions.

And I'm like, "Did you see this? Did you watch this?" And her album has been such an amazing touchpoint for me in the last year in the pandemic. And you're asking these questions that she never really had time, or maybe space or the courage, is probably a better way to say it, to ask about yourself in the world and how God's hand is in all these things that feel so big. And so it really has been a blessing to me as well. That's how I met her. But then, you know, she stuck with me forever. She likes it or not.

Annie: Listen, that is why you and I are going to be friends, Shana, because we're both the people that are like, "Hey, I don't know what you think you signed up for but I'm not going anyway." So you're stuck with me.

Shana: I stand up for eternity, baby. Let's do this.

Annie: That's it.

Shana: Even in heaven, I'm going to find her house and come over for breakfast.

Annie: Listen, I saw some friends just this weekend that are newer friends. And the guy said, "Oh, I'm sorry we don't have more time." And I was like, "Oh, are you thinking this is our only time seeing each other. We're just getting started, my guy. You aren't even ready."

Shana: You need to buckle up. Buckle up.

Annie: That's it. That's it. That's exactly right. Shana, will you kind of tell everybody what Corner to Corner is?

Shana: I would love to. Corner the Corner is a faith-based nonprofit here in Nashville. Well, we do a couple of things. We have amazing programs. But really our mission is to eradicate economic and educational inequities. We want to create that equity right here in Nashville and our surrounding cities.

So we do that through these two programs. One is called Script to Screen where we help kids fall in love with literacy through making their own movies. But the one that I think really resonates to your audience is going to be called The Academy. The Academy is a 10 week program where we help black entrepreneurs plan, start, and grow their own small businesses.

And since its inception in 2016, we've graduated over 500 black entrepreneurs. And in 2021 alone, they put \$10 million, yes, \$10 million back into the neighborhood economy. And so we're growing in that. We're asking the Lord to lead us in more amazing ways and really making sure that their businesses flourish in our economy right here in Nashville.

Annie: It's amazing.

Shana: So that is a Corner to Corner in a nutshell, but I mean, we have so many more things going on. So we would love for people to check us out on Instagram, Facebook.

Annie: We're going to share all those things. And for our friends listening for them to tie some bows together, Ellie's involved. That's how you and I are friends, is Ellie introduced us. And Will Acuff, one of the co-founders, is our friend, John Acuff's brother.

Shana: Yes, yes, yes.

Annie: I love when my friends become friends with my friends. And so I like when everybody knows that there's a bunch of ties in our friendships. So...

Shana: And it depends on who you ask, Will or John, which... They always say that they're the better-

Annie: The better Acuff.

Shana: Depends on the day. They might be the better-looking one, they might be taller one, the smarter one. They constantly... if you listen to a bunch of podcasts where they're overlapping, somebody is going to say that they're better than the other.

Annie: That's right.

Shana: But personally, you know, the youngest Acuff is my great Acuff. So they both lose in that department. But it's okay.

Annie: What made you get involved with Corner to Corner? Because you're a lawyer. I think everybody should hear this.

Shana: I was a lawyer. I was a healthcare lawyer. I will start back a little bit to when I first started practicing law that I kind of catapulted the conversation of how I got started with Corner to Corner. I think everybody has this feeling, right, when you're new to a field or a job, I started practicing law when I was 24. And so I was the youngest person at... I worked for the state of Tennessee, the Healthcare Finance & Administration. So I was a younger person in my department.

And everybody was nice and welcoming, but I really didn't have community. If you ever get a doctorate degree or really go deep in something, or maybe have a baby, you feel like, "Okay, I was asleep for three years, and I woke up and the world moved on, and my friends were married." And I was still trying to figure out who I was as a young adult with this now degree and kind of professional responsibilities.

And so a lot of people who worked with me, they were married, they had children that were like toddlers. And I was like, "I just want to hang out on a Saturday." And it was hard for me to find community there. But what the Lord uncovered to me was people were gravitated to me because of my fashion, because of my style.

Annie: Yes,

Shana: I would wear pink and red and heels. I was still in that phase. I was super excited about getting dressed for work and everybody else was like black, brown, gray. It was a joke.

Annie: You're like, "Y'all are not ready for me."

Shana: I mean, all I had was time and money. So I shopped a lot.

Annie: That's it. Welcome to being single. Here's the two things you got: time and money.

Shana: And so I'd go out and I was shopping, and I buy new things. So it was like the running joke the day that would people come to my office to see what I wore. And then they would show me things that they bought. "Oh, I bought this new scarf. I went on vacation. My daughter bought me these sunglasses." And people were getting excited about fashion again.

And so I was like, "Huh, this is something, Lord," and just kind of let it marinate. And one day I was doing this thing where I'm like, "I'm going to get my health together. I'm going to work out." I went to the gym and the first thing I did was get on Facebook. Needless to say that that was a short-lived dream.

Annie: Were you on an elliptical or something or were you sitting in the sauna?

Shana: I was sitting on a not moving treadmill. That's the honest truth.

Annie: You were sitting on a treadmill, Shana?

Shana: Yes, yes. I was sitting, yeah. I was going to get a good playlist going.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Shana: At that time, it was Pandora. I don't even know if you remember that. But it was Pandora was the playlist they had at the time. And then it moved. And then some kind of way I got on Facebook, which is how life happens and I saw an ad from Mignon Francois, who is Nashville famous, but really successful internationally business owner. She owns The Cupcake Collection. And she was talking about this business program and \$400 you can learn how to start a business. And the Lord just gave me an aha moment.

Annie: Really?

Shana: So I texted the number which I thought was this really official number and it turned out to be Will's cell phone. And I texted him and I was like, "Hey, I want to be involved in this program." I got the last seat. He actually tried to tell me he was sold out-

Annie: Uh-uh.

Shana: ...but I was like, "No, I texted you last night, you just didn't respond till today." The lawyer in me negotiated my way into this class.

Annie: That's it. That's it.

Shana: So whoever texted him that morning without a look, I don't know who it is. But I had texted the night before. So you know.

Annie: You're like, "Check the timestamps."

Shana: Okay, give me the receipt. Submit them to the court. Submit them to the court. So yeah, I'm negotiating my way into the last seat in that class. Honestly, I've found so much more than I was looking for. Yes, I found the business and I have a business called The Fashion Chase and it's going really well, but what I found you-

Annie: We can follow you on Instagram too, right?

Shana: Yes. If you're into clothes or you just want to see what I wear to work some days... Everybody in my office is like, "Where are you going?" I'm like, "Here." I didn't have nowhere to wear these pink platform heels. So I'm wearing them here.

Annie: Say your Instagram account again.

Shana: The Fashion Chase.

Annie: The Fashion Chase. Okay, I'm literally typing it in right this minute.

Shana: Come on and follow me, friends. I'm loving that and growing that. And sometimes you pour so much into other people's businesses, you're like, "Oh, let me let me go back. I have mine on autopilot. Let me go back in a few creativity," which is my goal this year as well.

Annie: We're going to get there in a minute. But you got a major promotion at Corner to Corner and you decided this is the year you're going to put back into Fashion Chase.

Shana: Yeah. You know what? I decided that the Lord didn't want me to have a husband and kids. He just wants me to work all day.

Annie: We're not speaking that. We're not speaking that.

Shana: We're fun work. Creativity is fun work. So I'm going to work on Corner to Corner, which also is really fun. It's stretching me in different ways. I got promoted from a director of the Academy, which is the program for entrepreneurship to the executive director of the nonprofit. And so I am working out new muscles, leadership muscles, understanding the board, and getting some different mentorships. And so that's exciting and a little scary, because I've been promoted and stepped out on something different.

But The Fashion Chase has always felt like home. It's more sort of a thing of like if someone has a hobby, they like to sew or they like to run and you know, kind of even though that is work is more so feeling and reminding you of skills that you have when on certain days you feel like, "I don't know how to do any of these things. But the Lord has really been faithful in that too.

Annie: Well, okay, talk about that for a second. So having hobbies and having like a thing you know how to do is actually helping you with where you feel unknown at work.

Shana: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Annie: That's interesting, Shana.

Shana: I mean, that's the thing about entrepreneurship and why Black entrepreneurship and black businesses are so important is because a lot of times people look at black communities or minority communities and think, "Oh, they're resource deprived," or "they don't have this," or "they need that."

But God has given us all skills, talents, and passions that He did not need help giving us, and that are being honed and used in kind of that back seats behind the scenes kinds of ways. But we encourage entrepreneurs to step out on the things that you have. And so if you have a hobby or if you have a talent or a skill, it's absolutely something that you can turn into a business. Because if you like to cook, I can guarantee you, you have a client in me.

Annie: And me too.

Shana: I hate to cook. And then in fashion, I thought everybody loves clothes. Every girl likes to shop. That is not true.

Annie: Not true. I want to look right, but I don't know how to pick it out.

Shana: Right. And finding your personal style and finding how you feel the most powerful and how you show up in the world is a skill and a muscle that I've been so gifted to help people discover in new and exciting ways. And that's what any business. A podcast, you think everybody can talk, everybody can go out and eat. But to really be able to pull people in and explain what you're doing and to change their minds or spark curiosity, that is a skill that as you've done has grown businesses.

And so that's what entrepreneurs are doing as well. I'm helping them see that they're also discovering within themselves like, Oh, wait, what I'm good at is not

common knowledge, is not something that's basic, it really is a value, a value add to our community into our economy. And so it's been really fun to model that and then to speak into that for other people.

Annie: I'd love for you to tell the story about the woman who started the notary-

Shana: Oh, yes.

Annie: Because when I heard her story, I thought, "Wait, she had a skill that she didn't know everyone else didn't have and she saw a need that I've never seen." And I didn't know if that's probably... Honestly... Oh, Shana, I should also just say here, I'm probably going to ask you questions and say things that may not be worded perfectly, but I'd rather ask you the honest question and you correct me.

Shana: No, yeah. Oh, come on.

Annie: So it may be a privileged point of view that I never knew you needed notaries like her company she created. Like that's never been something-

Shana: Oh, no, that's not a privilege.

Annie: Okay.

Shana: I think that's an adult thing.

Annie: You're like, "Annie, it's not a privilege. It's just grown up. So you need to grow up."

Shana: No. Because you don't need a notary until you need a notary. You know?

Annie: Yes. So will you explain what she created?

Shana: Yes. So her name is Adrienne Bowling. She has A1 Mobile Notary. And she was a notary and just kind of a people called her, she would notarize this, notarize that. But then she found that people were calling her and needing notaries on demand and people, especially during COVID—but she started this before COVID—but if they were sick, they needed a notary to help pass on their house or their legacy or a lot of real estate agents needed notaries. And there was no notary on demand. You would go and say, "Hi, I need a notary," and they're like, "Come back tomorrow between 2 and 2:07 and notary will be available." You're like, "Wait, no that doesn't work."

So she created a mobile notary, the Uber of notaries. You call her and either her or someone in her network will give you a time similar to Uber, they will come, they will notarize whatever you need. I mean, she's notarized things in the parking lot. She's notarized things in the COVID wing. She's notarized things for government agents.

So from any gamut, we need notaries, legal documents need them. And so sometimes if you don't really interact with those types of documents, you don't even know what it is or what a notary is. But it basically makes sure that you have a witness and that things are done properly based on whatever rules or legalities that you're following depending on the industry.

So she started with Corner to Corner with the business. She had the mobile notary and she was making about \$30,000 a year. So obviously still on the side hustle phase. But after taking our class, teaching the foundations to entrepreneurship, she was able to make \$80,000-

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Shana: ...in that first year and build a community of notaries, educating them about the professionalism of a notary. Because they teach you how to notarize. But as in any industry, its actions and professionalism and a follow up, things like that that you really have to get under control. So she's amazing. She's one of our favorite graduates. I shouldn't say favorite graduate. If they're listening, you're all our favorite.

Annie: All of you guys. All of you guys.

Shana: Yeah, all 500 of y'all are our favorite. But she also is one of our facilitators. Because we believe that the facilitators in the classes should be about 10 to 20 steps ahead of the people enrolling.

Annie: Interesting.

Shana: And that's really important and intentional because of this fact. If Oprah was going to open a business school, we would all sign up. It'd be great to have Oprah as your teacher, but she does not know Facebook ads. So you're going to ask her a Facebook ad question that she won't know. And that's no disrespect to Oprah. She has people.

Annie: I don't know how to do Facebook ads.

Shana: Right, we have people. But I know how to do them because at Corner to Corner we're running them. We have someone who's kind of given us some direction. But I'm looking at the numbers, I'm understanding and I'm like, "Okay, people click out this quickly." "What are clicks? What does that even mean?"

So if you have somebody who actually is about 10 to 20 steps ahead of you, they can (a) help you avoid the pitfalls, but (b) they speak the same language that you're speaking as you're starting your business. And of course, we want our entrepreneurs to grow and kind of max out. We have people who have made million dollars in our program.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Shana: But really what's important as facilitators are saying, "I see where you are, I've been where you are. And these are some skills that can help you catapult for quicker." So really building that community and that neighborhood.

Annie: How do y'all find students? Where do they come from?

Shana: Honestly they find us. It's a hybrid. I shouldn't say that. So we do a lot of Facebook ads, but 65% of our students that enroll are from word of mouth. So our alumni are telling people like, Run, do not walk to this program. And so we do TikTok. We have a lot of TikTok, and that's kind of a growing field for us. And honestly, the TikTok and things like that are bringing people from outside of Nashville's interest. Like, "Hey, I don't live there but I see you're virtual." And that's really fun.

But we do maintain a focus on our Nashville neighbors. So we have partnerships with everyone from government agencies, other nonprofits to schools that really can filter people in. We have a really robust social media presence. And then if you go anywhere at a market or a church function, or cookout, we're probably there just to make sure we get the word out on what's available in our Nashville neighborhood.

Annie: I think it's really cool because I will notice the neighborhoods where a lot of your students live and grow up are around me. And I will see y'all and grocery stores. And then I'm like, "Oh, there's Corner to Corner. Corner to Corner is right here." Because in every person who's walking into that Kroger, you see a potential student who might be an entrepreneur.

Shana: Absolutely. And if not them, then someone that they know. I mean, our ages... You know, we talked about customer a lot. But the people who are interested in entrepreneurship really does run the gamut between... Our youngest has been about 13. We have three 13-year-olds across the years enrolled. And of course, their parents are active as well.

And then our oldest was 72. And she said, "I've raised my children, I've fit into my grandchildren, I've worked two jobs for the necessity of it, I'm on a fixed income, but now it's time for me to do what I love to do." And so she was a seamstress her entire life. And I tell you she can sew like nobody's business. But she was really interested in geolo... genealogy rather. And so she started just on the side doing things for her pastor and her friends. And so she's still growing that business. That's not a multi-million dollar business, but that's a challenging industry.

But the point of what I'm saying is that we asked our students to define success for themselves and find whenever in their life they want to start that entrepreneurship journey that we welcome them. And so places like Kroger's and places like after-school programs where the parents are picking up the kids.

Annie: Oh, wow.

Shana: Also places like markets where other entrepreneurs are already selling their products or services. They really all have a different audience that kind of filters into Corner to Corner the Academy.

Annie: And everyone y'all serve is black?

Shana: Basically everyone. Our target market is like we have had some people who identify as non-black graduate, but that's a pretty small number. So 88% of our graduates are black women.

Annie: Oh, my gosh. Black women.

Shana: And the high 90s are just people who identify as black generally.

Annie: 88% are female.

Shana: Yes, 88%.

Annie: Shana!

Shana: And let me tell you why that's so important. Because Goldman Sachs did a study... We love Goldman Sachs. And they did a study about black entrepreneurship. And so what they said, firstly, was that about 13% of white men own businesses. So we all can understand that the system was set up for the success of white men. Then 13% is basically going to be the average, the goal, the G-O-A-L, the goal that we're aiming towards. And only 0.8% of black women own small business. And so, it's like-

Annie: Wait, so 12% of men and point 0.8% of black women.

Shana: 10% men and not even 1% of black women.

Annie: Wow.

Shana: Not even 1%. And so our challenge as someone who has a heart and a hand in entrepreneurship, and black women are leading graduates 88% percent. We're asking the question of why. What is it? Again, we know is not lack of talent, lack of drive, lack of knowledge, lack of desire. Where is the differentiator coming? And so our job is to constantly ask that question and to see it from different vantage points, and then to eliminate those barriers and to create those on-ramps to opportunities for all of our neighbors to thrive.

Annie: I am blown away by that stat. That is unreal. That is unreal.

Shana: It's crazy.

Annie: Less than 1%.

Shana: I'll send you the link if anybody's interested.

Annie: Yeah, we will share. We'll put in the show notes.

Shana: We knew that there was a huge gap, and we tried to say that. And when you say it, people are like, "No, but I know two black women who have businesses and I know five white..." But when you look at the stat nationally, it is gut-wrenching to say... I mean, it's not even close to being equitable, equal, or whatever word people prefer. It is grossly inequitable. And the question is why?

And if we all ask ourselves the question, I think that we all can get to an answer. And we all have a small price to pay. Like, it's not that we're asking your listeners,

any one person to say, "I have the answer." But we all have things that we can do to bring it back closer to the middle.

[00:24:32] <music>

Sponsor: Hi friend! Just interrupting this conversation real quick to share about another one of our incredible partners, [KiwiCo](#). I love the way that the New Year gives us all, including the kiddos in our lives, a fresh start to discover new things about ourselves and our interests.

With a KiwiCo subscription, your MiniBFFs or the kids in your life can make new discoveries all year long. They can explore things like the engineering and mechanics behind everyday objects, the science and chemistry of cooking, geography, and culture from new places, and brand new art and design techniques all through seriously fun hands-on projects.

Y'all know I did a Kiwi crate with some of my dearest ManiBFFs. I loved how each of their personalities came out. One of them loved getting out the supplies and organizing them and reading the directions, and one of them loved the actual building part of the project, and one was like the encourager championing them through it all. It was so fun. They were all so proud by the end when the robot actually set out the Dominos just like it was supposed to.

Here's the thing. You have this special place in the lives of kids you're around to encourage them to be innovators and creative thinkers with KiwiCo. They're going to learn new skills and make cool connections that will allow their confidence to grow.

And maybe the best part, KiwiCo does the legwork to find creative ways to keep your children busy and challenged. So you don't have to think it up or gather the supplies. You just get to spend quality time tackling the projects together.

They've got different crate lines for different ages. So there's something for literally everyone. And there's no commitment. So you can pause or cancel anytime. Redefine learning with play and get 50% off your first month plus free shipping on any crate line with the code THATSOUNDSFUN at [kiwico.com](#). That's 50% off your first month at [kiwico.com](#), and the promo code is THATSOUNDSFUN.

Sponsor: And I love that I get to tell you about another one of our partners, [Liquid I.V.](#) Listen, you'll know how we feel about Liquid I.V. around here. Taking good care of ourselves and staying hydrated. Is it a new goal for us around here, but it's

definitely one that we are carrying over from 2021 into 2022. Am I right? It's a good thing we've got our friends from Liquid I.V. in our corner.

One stick of Liquid I.V. mixed in my water bottle hydrates faster and more efficiently than water alone. Liquid I.V. has so many awesome flavors like, oh, tangerine. I love the tangerine, lemon lime, strawberry, my tried and true favorite Acai Berry. And it's one of those things that just has all of us around here at Downs Books and at That Sounds Fun Network just making sure it is part of our daily habits.

And when I use that Energy Multiplier, you guys, watch out, watch out, I am ready to go. Liquid I.V. contains five essential vitamins B3, B5, B6, B12, and vitamin C, and three times the electrolytes of traditional sports drinks.

It's non-GMO, and it's free from gluten and dairy, and soy, so no allergies to worry about. And it's that cellular transport technology that gets all the good stuff absorbed into your bloodstream and very quickly. You can grab it Liquid I.V. nationwide at Costco or you can get 25% off when you go to Liquidiv.com and use the code THATSOUNDSFUN at checkout. That's 25% off anything you order when you use the promo code THATSOUNDSFUN at Liquidiv.com. Experience better hydration today at Liquidiv.com, promo code, THATSOUNDSFUN.

And now back to our conversation with Shana.

[00:27:42] <music>

Annie: I'm going to ask a question that I think we'll leave in the show, but if it's a terrible question, we won't.

Shana: Okay.

Annie: So I've started two companies. Have I done something that's made it harder for a black woman to start a company? Have I done something to help a black woman start a company? Have I been a neutral force?

Shana: Wow. Okay, that's a great question I think is necessary for us to talk about. And it may be a different long conversation at a different time-

Annie: You're like, "Annie, we're going to go eat lunch and I'm going to tell you the whole thing."

Shana: Yeah. "Let me throw this nugget in here." I think that there is a misconception that entrepreneurship is a pie. Right? And that if you take two slices, it makes the pie smaller for other people. And that is absolutely not true.

Annie: Okay, good.

Shana: You can start a thousand companies and there is still room in theory, for every black woman who wants to start a company to start a company. And so what we're not saying and the message that we don't want people to interpret or perceive or kind of create in their head is that if they have I cannot have, therefore, I'm choosing between me and them. And most people always choose themselves.

We are asking you to say care about your own financial future, right? That's a biblical principle if we want to even take that deep. The Lord said, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself. So you must first love yourself, start your business, check your bank account, make sure your kids are educated."

But our request is that you then open that circle of love to your neighbors. So if you care about your kids' education, look at your kid at school and say, "What does this look like in the neighborhood education? Even if they're not my actual next-door neighbor, they're kingdom neighbors, right? It's a bigger neighborhood. What does that look like?"

If I have two businesses, what am I doing to help other people? Do I have a pipeline to help other people? Do I have scholarships and my marketing to radio stations that black people listen to? Am I marketing to places where people who have different abilities live, work, and play? Am I saying it in Spanish? Am I really trying?

And of course, you can't do all the things. You can pick one avenue and really amplify that. And so for us, particularly as black entrepreneurs is the avenue that we've chosen. And so we say any downs has a great program and she has a scholarship. And now you send it to us and you put it on black radio and you send it to black pastors. And you make sure that that community where they are, they don't have to come to you in order to understand what you're offering.

And so I don't know if I can answer the questions for you particularly. But if you put in the audience is thinking, "Am I helping? Am I hurting? What can I do?" I'm not saying don't do what God has called you to do. I'm saying the opposite. I'm saying that do what you're supposed to do and then say, "How can I then open this

to other people in a small way, in a big way, in a financial way, in a “share my knowledge” way?”

There are always ways to give back. And not in a savior way. I know all the things that my feet and let me pour into you. But in "I have things to offer. You have things to offer. Let's work together to making the community or the industry that we want to see."

Annie: Yes, that's one of the things I'm excited about that you and I've talked about a little bit about is thinking about future students that are coming in that want to write books or want to do podcasts or just want to hear from another woman who started businesses. I'm like, "Shana, I don't know everything, but I'll come sit. I'll come sit and I'll make friends. I'll tell them which microphone to buy.

Shana: You know more than enough. I mean, even though it would... this is my first time on the riverside, which is the software I guess you guys use here. It's my first time using it, so I'm like, "Oh, this is interesting. Never heard of it. What made you choose that?" Maybe I can share this with some of our podcast. So we have a few graduates who have podcasts about sports and things like that." And so maybe that's a good next step for them.

You don't even know what seeds you can plant because we all have so many seasons out of it. And to remember that we all have them. It's not just people who you see you decide are quote-unquote, "successful." But we all have them.

Because there may be someone who can talk about balancing motherhood or fatherhood and their business. That is valuable to a lot of our students who majority of them are parents, which is why our classes are at night, because they have to get their kids and make sure their kids are fed and have their sports, you know, football or whatever. And this is a part of their family rhythm. They can't eclipse that. So just small things like that really make a difference.

Annie: When you think about this 88% of the women who are making businesses, will you give us some other examples of the kind of entrepreneur businesses that are beginning? I mean, \$10 million back into the... I mean, that is like they printed money practically. They took money that did not exist in that community and they put \$10 million into it. It's incredible.

Shana: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. I'll talk about a couple of people that have graduated that we love and then we'll also talk about some challenges that we are trying to address right now in this pandemic. I don't even know the right word. It's not

post-pandemic, it's not the beginning of it. We're still figuring out at this point. Yesterday, I heard of - what? Flurona. Like flu and Corona together.

Annie: What are we going to do with this? What are we going to do with this? We're going to pray. We need the Lord. We need the Lord to stop this thing.

Shana: Trust we are praying every day and every Monday live in class, y'all. Set your calendars. Because our team is like, "Lord, we need you." But we have amazing graduates. So one of our 88% are women is... her name is Ja'. And she has GlamHER Hair Addiction. And basically, it's a natural haircare products for particularly black women or people who may have similar hair types of curly hair type.

And she went through our program. I was actually blessed to be her facilitator, and I was really excited about the work that she was doing. And all of our students are using her stuff are like, "This is great." And so she heard about this opportunity that Walmart were supporting local entrepreneurs in their local Walmart.

So she went on there, she applied, she put out the application, she got rejected. She was like, "Oh, man." They told her a couple things to tweak, and she figured out some holes and some other people who may have gotten it for different reasons. She went on and applied it again and again and again.

She applied for this five times. Each time she's iterating, each time she's changing some things, each time she's tightening it up-

Annie: That's so heartbreaking. That is a lot of times.

Shana: It is. It's a lot of times. So resiliency. Resiliency is necessary in business. You have a lot of people that say, "It's so hard to start businesses. Are you sure they can do it?" I'm sure. They have resiliency, they have ideas, they have what it takes, and then they have the form of training through the academy to understand the business world intimately.

So after five times, Annie, she was accepted. She got an email that said, "Congratulations! You are accepted to our Walmart, a local business program." She got this and she didn't tell anybody.

Annie: Oh.

Shana: She had a sign printed out and put it in her front yard.

Annie: Oh, my gosh.

Shana: If you watch I Academy graduation... Our academy graduation was November 17. We did a live. You can probably find it on Facebook. I'll try to pin it if I can figure that out. Or I sent you the link. But we have a picture of her and the sign.

Her kids come home from school that day and they're like, "Mom, what is this?" And she's like, "Guys, I was accepted." And they were like, "Mom, you are not telling the truth. You're accepted to Walmart. Like stop." And she went on her computer, she pulled up the acceptance letter from Walmart. And her kids are like, "Oh my gosh, this is so amazing." And her kids will tell you before she does. They'll say, "Hey, how are you doing? My mom's in Walmart." Like they're so excited.

And really what that does reminded not only resiliency is legacy building. Businesses are legacy, is community, is future, is like planting that mustard seed. It's going to take some years to grow, it's going to take some years to sprout, but your grandkids will see the fruits of that mustard seed. So Ja' was one that we're really, really excited about.

Annie: So what does that mean? Does that mean she gets mentored at Walmart? Does that mean they carry her stuff? What does that mean?

Shana: They carry her products. So in a local Walmart. So not nationally, but the local Walmart's have local businesses and so they carry on walmart.com-

Annie: That's cool.

Shana: ...and I think in one of the local Walmarts.

Annie: What does she make?

Shana: She has haircare park.

Annie: Hair, yeah. You said that. You said that. And is it like liquidy things or is it like extensions and wigs?

Shana: No, no, it's like-

Annie: Like a shampoo kind of thing.

Shana: ...conditioner, shampoo.

Annie: Okay, we'll try to find it and link to it if it's on Walmart.com.

Shana: I don't think dry shampoo. Let me take that one back. I think we're kind of talking about that. But I think it's just shampoo, conditioner and like a cream that she makes for... I'll try to find it and link to it too. I know her personally so I get it from the source. I'm not going to wanna pay the Walmart markup.

Annie: Yeah, we'll see if she'll give us a code for our people. Like little personal code.

Shana: You always scoop it in their website. But that's so exciting-

Annie: It's amazing.

Shana: ...because Walmart is a place where people are wanting to try new things and new places, and especially if they're local, they can really connect to your community. And so that's one of our women graduates.

But then one of our favorite earlier graduates is Marcus Buggs. Again, I say favorite all the time. I don't mean it that way, friends.

Annie: You can list anybody and they're going to be your favorite.

Shana: There you go.

Annie: There you go.

Shana: Everybody is my favorite. I love you all. But Marcus Buggs is the owner of Coneheads. So if you're in Nashville-

Annie: Oh, I love Coneheads.

Shana: Yes, it's Coneheads. And Marcus was actually one of the first graduates of the academy. And so we have a saying at the Academy that says, "Start small so you can start now." We tell people all the time, you want to be the next X, Y and Z, but you have to start really small and invest and learn, iterate, and pivot.

And so Marcus did just that. Marcus had a catering company, and he catered and he kind of figured out what people were liking and what food people are really drawn

to. And then he found that when he catered a lot of people want to enhance free food or grab and go or these kind of quicker foods, but they liked the soulful part of it that he made. And so he ended up in creating a waffle cone with chicken and it's like a chicken and waffles, but in one hand you can walk around-

Annie: You can hold in your hand.

Shana: You hold in your hand. Like ice cream cone with chicken and it has sauce on it. But you can walk around and you can talk and you won't like kind of be bogged down by the whole plate and fork experience. So that's really fun.

Annie: But it still taste incre...

Shana: It's incredible.

Annie: It is like soul food.

Shana: Yes, yes. So I always make him cater. I'm like, "Can you cater this?" Which they do to catering. But he doesn't mind. But it's always like, "We need this here." So if you ever go to Coneheads, tell him Annie Down at Corner to Corner sent you to say hello.

Annie: That's right.

Shana: But definitely just amazing experience. And really shows when people kind of lean in and try the things that we're teaching, how it can grow exponentially. And if you're listening and you're not in Nashville, maybe you're in a small town, you don't really understand how hard restaurant and real estate is in Nashville. So they have a restaurant. And actually he has two. He's opened one more last week called Plane Jane.

Annie: Where's that?

Shana: It's right behind Coneheads. It's actually a cocktail lounge.

Annie: Let's go.

Shana: Oh, yes, we should go. That's our next trip.

Annie: That is our next trip. Let's get some coneheads so that we have all the sustenance we need.

Shana: No food.

Annie: And then we go. I'm holding you to that, Shane. I'm holding you to that.

Shana: Hey, you don't have to twist my arm.. I won't do it on a snow day like today.

Annie: No.

Shana: I'm in. So that's really exciting to get not only one but two locations. It's such a big feat in Nashville and says so much about the work that he's doing. He actually sponsored to 15 last year, 15 entrepreneurs who are entrepreneurs to go through the program because he said that's how much he believed in it. That if they couldn't afford it, he paid for 15. And some of them are actually students or people who worked at his restaurant.

Annie: He sent some of his employees to Corner to Corner Academy?

Shana: Yeah.

Annie: Wow.

Shana: And you know, the thing about having your employees work there, obviously that shows that you are invested in their dreams, that you're not trying to hold them hostage to things that matter to you. And so also creates a dynamic of trust within that. But they also understand now what is like to be the boss. So they're not as quick to throw this away or to use this many stickers because they understand that everything is money.

Annie: They're handing out two napkins now instead of four.

Shana: Every day I go to the Chick-fil-A, I'm wondering about... I'm like, "They have the money but to give 29 sauces." But still, we can tie this up just a little bit Chick-filA. But as someone who has a small business, I understand that these sauces are many. They're many.

Annie: Yeah, that's right.

[00:40:31] <music>

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[00:43:28] <music>

Annie: I'm thinking about our snow day we're having today and about the pandemic. How do stop like that in work, how do interruptions like that uniquely challenge our black entrepreneur friends?

Shana: Yeah, absolutely. It is a challenge. And I think that that's an important question. And I'm grateful that you asked that question because we all know how it affected the bigger economic mobility of small businesses or even larger chain restaurants that are big business. But even more so 41% of black businesses closed for good in COVID.

Annie: 41%. Oh, my gosh.

Annie: That's a national number, not just in our Nashville neighborhoods. It's a national number. But that's a big deal. Because there's a lot of history, a lot of legacy that was lost. And it was lost for a number of reasons. The first is that they had a hard time getting the PPP loans. There have been so many studies out and I can't quote them right now and I want to be genuine to their findings. But they just found that that wasn't an avenue. They didn't have the resources, they didn't have the banking relationships because you had to go through a bank.

Annie: Yes. Yes.

Shana: So many of us if you think about, do you know your banker? No. You put a check on your phone and you take money out when you need it and you don't understand the importance of that bank relationship. And so if it hasn't been initiated, and you

are just figuring it out, nobody's told you, then you don't have that banking relationship.

Annie: Or if you've already had the same business for 50 years and you've never had to have that kind of relationship.

Shana: Exactly, exactly.

Annie: Oh, man, this makes me sad.

Shana: Even our older businesses all are into personal relationships. A lot of them are in neighborhoods. So they're used to people walking down or students walking across or things like that where I see you in person. Well, if you cut off the in-person pipeline and they don't have that online presence, they really suffered a loss, a hit. And with their employees as well. They now had to lay off or furlough or whatever the pipeline was for them all employees that worked in person. And they didn't have those online skills. And so what we did at Corner to Corner we instantly were able to (a) pivot our classes online. We pivoted from in-person to online in three days. There was no-

Annie: Oh, wow.

Shana: Yeah, no, trust me, I didn't sleep for three days.

Annie: You're like still recovering from March 2020.

Shana: Right. I'm still trying to take a nap.

Annie: But we got those businesses open.

Shana: Our Corner to Corners things went online. We had 10 classes that went from in-person to virtual in three days. And keep in mind Nashville, we also had a tornado the week before.

Annie: Oh, yeah. Our friends listening know because CrossPoint Church still ain't all the way better.

Shana: Oh, yeah. I mean, we had a tornado. Literally our old office, the whole building is gone. We used to work out of a place called theLAB on A Jefferson Street. It's all the way gone. So we have to find a new location. So we started to work remotely. Church of the City was so great to let us kind of squat with them as we were trying

to get some internet issues and things on. But we took all of our classes online for three days. And then we immediately started teaching our students how to build a Shopify class.

Annie: Wow.

Shana: So we have Shopify classes right now. It's 21 businesses at the end of the year, December 17, launched other Shopify business through our class. And so we're doing those pretty often. We did talk about how to make social media, how to do video. We taught a lot of classes on our Facebook, about how to pivot quickly. And so we wanted that to be something that our students have firsthand now is that digital first model.

But it really was challenging because a lot of our markets and our businesses were used to that in a personal, and just as a culture, that is a cultural distinction that we do want to go touch and see and feel, and talk to and create community with. And so when that was cut off, we all are really trying to scramble about how to still have that in a personal experience, but digitally. And I don't know if we've figured out perfectly, but we really are moving in that way. And our entrepreneurs are doing a great job and really making that part of their mission for their business.

Annie: Okay. Shana, tell me... you said you were going to mention some of the challenges you're facing and what you're seeing some roadblocks, maybe?

Shana: I think that first one, the digital first model, is a roadblock. And we're constantly asking people to connect with us who have that type of expertise. So if anyone's listening, I'd love to get an email from them. Shana@cornertocorner.org.

Another challenge that we have, though, is the access to capital. That piece when they are ready to get money and have access to capital, there is a big push towards equitable lending practices and things like that. But we're not there yet, if we want to be really honest and transparent about the experience of entrepreneurs.

And so what we've done at Corner to Corner, again, we believe that we want to be on the forefront of problem-solving as well as bringing in other people who are experts to really help them figure out how to move in that way.

What we've done is we have a program called Academy Invested, and we give anywhere between \$250 and \$1,000 of a 1% interest. So small interest loan. We teach them how to repay, we help them understand what some of the contracts are, then building bridges to other banks that then are saying, "Okay, I see what the

work you've done in Corner to Corner, your repayment, I see they've given you a letter of recommendation. Let's work together to really understand what that looks like."

And so we've given 12 loans out under Academy Invested. And we are hoping this year... Honestly, our goal this year is \$50,000 of small interest loans. And that's important because it is infusing capital at the beginning. If we all think about our businesses, what could you have done with \$1,000 to then get that running? Is it as ads? Is it ordering those books that you don't have to do pre-orders because you have them on hand to get that customer service going? Is it dropshipping? Is it what Ja' who also received \$1,000 because of that Walmart order? Okay, Walmart said yes. Now I have to get all these-

Annie: I gotta make it.

Shana: Yeah. Because their net was like 90 or something like that. So they're not giving you money today, they're giving it to you tomorrow, and helping you kind of get that caution. And so we've been so excited to help entrepreneurs do that. But then also having conversations. We're really open and available bankers and loans to say, "Hey, these are some practices that we want you to look at. We want to do our best to be prepared as well." It's on all of us to do our best.

But then we also want you to look at similarly situated people. What percent have gotten that loan who are non-black versus black entrepreneurs? And then really having open conversations about how we undo the kind of conveyor belt that has been created.

Annie: One of the areas of learning for me over probably the last three years has been the historical generational advantages that are sometimes based on race and sometimes based on socio-economic, how your grandparents had money, but even just the "my grandparents own land, and therefore, my..." Even those kinds of things, I mean, I'm sorry to tell you, Shana, it was a newer thing for me to learn.

Shana: No.

Annie: But watching entrepreneurs that are my peers, that are non-white struggle with things that I didn't struggle with because of generational advantages, not just Annie went to University of Georgia advantages.

Shana: Yeah, absolutely. And then I think people may have a misnomer about privilege, and they think is like, "I'm white, but I was born in this place, or I didn't have this,

or I took out loans to go to college." That's great. And we understand that. But the privilege is not necessarily an advantage. Privilege could be that you don't have a disadvantage.

So a lot of women are listening, you may understand men get up and they put on a button-down shirt, they pull on a blazer, they walk out the door, they barely comb their hair. As women, how much time do we think, "Is this too much cleavage? Is it just too tight? Where am I going? Is it going to be mostly men? Is it women?"

You think of so many things about yourself before you even show up to the world because of things that society has built. Well, think about that times a thousand. Even the way that you speak or what your name is, or how you present or the things that you like, or the station that you listen to, when people ask like, "What did you do over the summer?" or "What did you do every winter break?" And some people are like, "Oh, me and my family went skiing, no big deal."

You have to think like that's very expensive dream. And for you to be able to do that, it doesn't mean that you don't have challenges or you don't have heartbreak, or you don't have money questions, but it just gives you a different perspective. I always think of Home Alone. And think of like not only did they leave their child alone, but how could he afford a trip for nine to Paris?

Annie: That's number one.

Shana: Why are you even gone? How can you afford to be gone-

Annie: On Christmas.

Shana: ...to then leave your child at home? That is a privilege. And so it doesn't mean that you-

Annie: That's really funny.

Shana: ...are bounds ahead. It just means that you're not behind based on things you can't control such as race or gender.

Annie: When you say that what it makes me think of is how I give the guys on the teaching team at CrossPoint a hard time because they don't ever buy a new shirt when they're teaching. I always buy a new shirt when I'm teaching. Because I'm like, "No, it's different for me. Y'all don't understand is different for me. I have to think about 18 things y'all don't have to think about before I walk on stage."

I've given them a hard time. But as you're telling me this, you're teaching me that that multiplied times a lot is what some of our non-white friends are experiencing when they're trying to build businesses or get a degree or get a loan or get a house or whatever.

Shana: Right, exactly. I mean, it's so many things that's like, because I woke up today, things are not in my favor. And if that's not your experience... And it shouldn't be anybody's experience. Don't hear I wish people understood what it was like in the sense of I also want you to suffer, I also want you to feel that. Hear I'm happy that that's your experience. And the way that we're working towards is that to be everybody's experience.

You know, I jokingly say you can't win a race that you started before everyone else. You won't know if you're the best if you started first.

Annie: Wow.

Shana: And so really as entrepreneurs, we should want it to be equitable, because when I say I'm the best, it's because I know that I'm the best.

Annie: I know, yeah.

Shana: When LeBron or when Kobe or whomever is your favorite sports, well, they say they're the best is because they know. They played against the best, they played long enough, they played hard enough, they've take a lot-

Annie: They got the stats.

Shana: They're the best.

Annie: Yes! Yes!

Shana: If you start the game in the front, you don't really know if you're the best.

Annie: That's true.

Shana: That's why it should be important to all of us that there's an equitable experience amongst entrepreneurs.

Annie: I'm thinking of my friends. I know we have a couple of friends listening that have chronic illness. So it's even disabilities.

Shana: Oh, sure.

Annie: No matter your race or gender, there's disabilities where people wake up and they are disadvantaged from the moment they wake up-

Shana: Absolutely.

Annie: ...because of something in their body. And so for those of us who are able in a lot of ways to just be more... I mean, I won't speak for males. I want to be more thoughtful when I wake up in the morning of what I am able to do and how I can step in and help.

So for our friends listening, I mean, we have people across the globe listening, it's not just like the Nashville sector, though I hope our national friends get real involved, what can we do with Corner to Corner if we live in Boise, Idaho or if we live in, you know, Guatemala or if we live in England? What do we do?

Shana: First of all, shout out to Boise, Idaho.

Annie: There's somebody who cares.

Shana: If you're listening, then this is where you, right?

Annie: The Lord made me to say that. That's right.

Shana: Amen. Amen. I'll accept that. So I think it is a two fo... well, I know that it's a two-fold kind of approach. The first is going to be expertise. So if you're a subject matter expert or if you're an entrepreneur, if you're an accountant, a banker, a bookkeeper... bookkeeper, they're so hard to find. If you're a bookkeeper, you're a unicorn. Yes, they are so hard to find. Everybody has the same bookkeeper, which means it's only one of them.

Annie: Right, right.

Shana: So we have guest speakers who come in each week virtually and in-person and they talk about this subject matter expertise based on what we're teaching that week. So we would love for you to sign up. You can do it virtually, in person. We will talk to you about it and kind of get you involved, let you know how our volunteers... to

help you really understand who we are and our mission and how our balance is operating, get you connected that way, firstly.

But secondly, we've had all these conversations, and we haven't shot around the fact that this is all about resources. Putting in resources to create resources. So as an entrepreneur, if you hear somebody say you can give \$100 a month and have a \$23,500 impact, you would definitely invest in that.

Annie: Yes.

Shana: That's what we're asking our monthly givers to do, to give \$100 a month and have-

Annie: Are you telling me that's the turnaround? If I get \$100 that your entrepreneurs are going to make \$23,000?

Shana: Yes.

Annie: Dude.

Shana: A \$100 a month. And that is to support one entrepreneur. So our entrepreneurs, for the class itself only pay \$140. That's the cost of the book. We pay for everything else. It takes us about \$1,200 per person to graduate them from our 10-week program. Keep in mind that we also have an alumni program that gives them pro bono legal for a year, a certain amount of we give them accounting, certain specialty classes, Shopify, the invested program. So we have about 8 to 10 programs that they don't pay for. It cost us.

Annie: Wow.

Shana: So if you invest \$100 a month, that's for one entrepreneur, it allows us to really bleed into it. When I say lean and bleed, give everything into that business to help that grow, the impact of that \$100 a month is \$23,500.

Annie: That is... I mean, I'm leaning away from the microphone, because I'm laying back in my chair going, "That is amazing." So we can do that from anywhere and be a part of that.

Shana: Anywhere. Yeah.

Annie: And I assume a bunch of... I'm sorry, I didn't look before but I assume if we go to Corner to Corners website, we can see some of the entrepreneurs and what they make and sell.

Shana: Yeah. So we're actually under a website revamp. So our actual website, which is cornertocorner.org, you can learn more about us. But we do have a drop down that talks about... I want to say it's called "success stories" and we also have one that says "directory." You can do cornertocorner.com/directory. And that gives you a shortlist of the products. So we do have some of that service base. And so we're still figuring out how to best market those because it's not something you can order and get home.

But we have our success stories online. We have our directory online. We have our philosophy online. And then also we post so much on our social media. So if you really want to just kind of get a daily infusion of joy and creativity and laughter, inspiration, and then learning about entrepreneurs, that probably will be a great way as well.

We're working on LinkedIn. So if your LinkedIn buff, I know a couple of those who are listening... You know, viewer us with caution. We're still learning. That's a new terrain. But we try to put some things out there for entrepreneurs circles who are just interested in the businesses that are coming out of the academy.

Annie: Brilliant. Shana, I mean, I am just (a) so thankful that Ellie made us friends-

Shana: Me too. She's the best.

Annie: Because I'm in on you and I'm in on Corner to Corner. I'm so excited. I'm excited that there's a financial way I can help. But I'm also excited that like what I've learned could help change a family's lineage. Like it could really help. And I get to make new friends. I get to make new friends. I love it.

Shana: I mean, we always talk about legacy in some kinds of ways, right? And a lot of conversations around elections about what's our American legacy, or what's our history, or what kinds of things happened with us, to us, for us, about, by us?

And so today is the day that you get to now create that new history. You know, if you don't like what happened before, if you can look back on your family lineage and say, "Yeah, we probably were part of the problem. We're probably out there picketing outside a little, you know, we're the greatest, I'm not proud of that." But what you can be proud of-

Annie: If you saw your family in Forrest Gump, you got something to do.

Shana: We always joke and it was like, "This is somebody's grandmother, they're not going to own up to it, but she belongs to some way, right? And she's mad." And that's part of it. It is what it is. We should absolutely address it and talk about it, bring it to the forefront, lament as Christians, and things of that nature.

But you get to decide what your family's legacy will be in the future. And you get to decide what your community looks like and what your economic ecosystem around you looks like, who you support, who you celebrate, who you uplift in thought, word, and deed, in your prayers. and your actions and your purchases and where you spend your money.

And so we know that Corner to Corner is good ground and it's a place that has a proven track record of success. So if you and your family are saying, This year we want to be more philanthropic. This year we want to open that circle of love, right, care about your own financial future and your neighbor's financial future but you want to do it with people who are tried and true, Corner to Corner is a great place.

And again, \$100 a month can yield \$23,500 of impact. So you don't have to question your impact or where it's going. You know that you can see it right in front of your face every day.

Annie: That's unbelievable! Okay, we're going to link to all that. But Shana, we're going to get personal first. I've kept you longer than I said I would-

Shana: No, we're good.

Annie: ...but one of my favorite things is if a single person comes on the pod, and there's a world where she would like to meet someone-

Shana: In this world? Okay.

Annie: Yeah. Who are you looking for? How can we help you find him? Let's resource you in a lot of ways today.

Shana: Amen. Okay, well, listen, this is an interesting question that I'm always like, "I don't know how to answer this." But I'll just tell you some things that I would like.

Annie: Yes, sure.

Shana: We'll see if we can wrap it up in a nice bow. Obviously, God-fearing and that they are driven by God. It's really important to me because I've been studying a lot about us being submissive to God and that we are submissive to someone.

And so, as a single woman, you hear the conversation of submits, submit all the time. But I think that the Lord is asking us all to submit. And so who we're submitting to and that he is submitting to God in a substantial way. Again, not just words but the action part is.

Fun and funny. He likes to have fun. Every time I think I want to move from Nashville, the Lord gives me a new job or promotes me so I'm here. I am here in Nashville. I won't even tempt him that way. If I keep praying, He's going to making me the mayor or something.

Annie: That's right. I'm going to make you the mayor of Nashville. You just hang on. We're bouncing to make you the mayor.

Shana: Here we go. So Nashville-based would be great if the Lord provides. Wants children. I want us to have the conversation of kids.

Annie: Sure.

Shana: And have hobbies. I like hobbies. I like to do things. And it's hard when you grow up to keep hobbies or to hold on to friendships. So him being really intentional about that will mean a lot to me because I know how intentional it is for me to hold on to friendships and hobbies. And you know, if you want to talk like celebrity crush-

Annie: Age?

Shana: I'm 32. So I mean-

Annie: So that's the window. Somewhere around there.

Shana: Somewhere around there. And if you're in your 20s listening to this, unless you are really, really on your game, you're not quite ready for a 32-year-old lady.

Annie: I want that 27 year old to break his biggest flexes on this.

Shana: Hey, listen, break for me. I love to be surprised. I love to be surprised.

Annie: Okay, celebrity crushes.

Shana: And really working in some way in their passion. It doesn't mean that your day job has to be full-on passion but if you love basketball, and that's your passion in some way you're really living that out. Because I think so much of our talents are in the grade as a society. And I want to die empty. I want the Lord to say, "She has nothing else, I guess it's time for her to come home."

Annie: Yeah, that's right. I always say I want the Lord to need a Sabbath after I get there because He's done hearing me pray for stuff."

Shana: He's tired. You feel me?

Annie: He's like, "Finally!" Celebrity crushes. Who is it?

Shana: I think it is a mash-up. I like Michael B. Jordan. He's actually intellectual. I like Trevor Noah because he is just honest. And it just is what it is. Right? He's like, this is what it is, good, bad, or ugly. And I think he's cool and funny. And I like Hasan Minhaj. He used to do the Patriot Act. I mean, he's still quirky and always talks about like this Indian uncle kind of odd that he has, which obviously I'm not Indian so I'm just getting the context clues. But he still has his own personality and slag and laughter again. I like a balance of like smart intellectual but still really just fun and silly. That's what I am.

Annie: Does he already have kids? Are you okay if he already has kids?

Shana: You know, we could talk about it.

Annie: Okay.

Shana: Kids with an S is responsibility.

Annie: Okay, so the 27-year-old with one or less kids is who we're looking for.

Shana: Okay, I found what you're bringing in your 30s. 30s brings a different level of just like, "All right, I've done the thing. It's too cold to go out." If you feel that way and I feel that way, I'm happy about it.

Annie: That's it.

Shana: But also I'm not like a super homebody. So I don't know. You know, I'm not a nomad. I know I met guys who like want to live here and then move in a year to there. I'm like, "Settle down."

Annie: You're like, "I'm done with that."

Shana: I can't keep up. I have too many shoes to pack up every year and like live in England and then move to Australia. I'm fine about vacationing there but I just want you to settle down.

Annie: Okay. I'm going to start really thinking. I've got a couple of men floating through my mind. So...

Shana: There you go. If you're listening or you have a son, we should have a very wholesome, less dramatic love is blind Nashville.

Annie: Yes, that's right. That's right.

Shana: Less dramatic because it got kind of too many tears-

Annie: Yeah, too much. No, I'm not interested. Shana, thanks for making time to do this.

Shana: Yay!

Annie: Is there anything we didn't say that you want to make sure we say?

Shana: I think we set it. I am so excited about you getting connected. I'm excited about the people in your audience wanting to learn more. What I hope that they get away from this podcast is obviously learn about Corner to Corner, that is my job. But more than that is a curiosity to say, "I hurt myself in this piece. I want to look into this more. I want to lean into this more." And to be able, again, to see all of our neighbors as a part of our family in a sense of an ecosystem and a kingdom-mindedness.

And so loving you, yours, your family, your finances, checking your bank statement three times a day, but then thinking, "I wonder who else I can help with this obsession about family education and things like that."

Annie: And I like the idea of just adding to our brains as we're making our weekend plans. Are we going to any businesses that are owned by non-white people? Today's a national holiday? It's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Are we going anywhere this

weekend that was owned by someone who isn't white? And that may be really easy in your neighborhood and you may have to think a little bit. But let's just be thoughtful.

Shana: I saw this thing on Instagram, which is interesting, that says, "We as a society has to say this: that black businesses are not just for black people." And you would think, "Oh, you know, most black businesses are patron by black people. But that's not true about non-black businesses. Versace's demographics racially are all across the board. Walmart and the people who are... if you're not black, your business are patron by everybody, including black people. And so we have to change the way that we see black entrepreneurship supporting black businesses, and really giving back to our communities in ways that are substantial.

Annie: Yes. My brain thinks my little comparison is male authors and male podcasters have men and women in their audience, but everybody assumes women authors and women podcasters are for women.

Shana: Like, "We got a girl boss."

Annie: No, you just got a boss.

Shana: And she happens to be a girl. And there's no shades of girl. I'm a girl. I'm a feminist. I'm all about it. But I think when we all start rethinking the boxes that we put each other in, then we can really get the best of what we need. Because sometimes, you know, you may have to just go ahead and get the black haircare products if your hair is a similar texture. It is what it is. Right?

Annie: That's right. That's right.

Shana: If you're biracial or things like that, you have to say, "I'm not interested in staying with whoever I have because either my mom used them and my friends use them or as part of our trend on TikTok. I need to go where what works best for me." And so that can be a really diverse array of things. And that our businesses offer quality experience, successful, tried and true products and services that can really expedite whatever you're looking to grow and move in your life.

Annie: Yeah, yeah. Oh, Shana, you're brilliant.

Shana: Yay!

Annie: Okay, the last question we always ask is because the show is called That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Shana: What sounds fun to me after this break is going to a movie alone without my... I'm here with my nieces and nephew. And is PG 13 or above. I will see that movie. That sounds fun to me.

What sounds fun to me is working towards the goal of making Nashville the number one place for black businesses to start to grow. And particularly I'm biased because I do have a business and so I'm saying like, how can I make that really pop? And what also sounds fine to me is I am in a personal style revamp. So yeah, deciding who I want to be on my own terms fashion wise is really fun.

Annie: Yes, girl.

Shana: Yeah.

Annie: Oh, okay, dear everyone with your single male friends, just get ready to watch this revamp. Let's go.

Shana: Yeah. I've been a professional for so long. I still have like dress pants. I'm like, "I don't even wear this to church. Why do I have it?" And so now it's time to just be who I want to be, but know how I feel when I wake up in the morning. So that sounds fun. That sounds fun to me.

Annie: Good. That's good, Shana. Thanks for doing this today.

Shana: Thank you. Good to see you.

[01:09:22] <music>

Annie: Oh, you guys, isn't she amazing? Oh my gosh. She's amazing. And so is Corner to Corner. Be sure to check them out and the great work they're doing. Find out all the ways you can support them at Cornertocorner.org and give Shana a follow and tell her thanks for being on the show.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find. Annie F. Downs on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook. All the places you may need me, that is how you can find me.

And I think that's it for me today, friends. Go out or stay home, do something that sounds fun to you. I will do the same today. Today what sounds fun to me is being warm. I would like to be warm. I know that Nashville does not have the winter that a lot of you guys have but we've had like more snow than I ever signed up for. So what's fun to me is being on the beach. That's exactly right.

So, you guys have a great week. We'll see you back here on Thursday with Gary LeVox from Rascal Flatts. That's going to be fun. We'll see y'all then.

[01:10:14] <music>