

A portrait of Jewel Burks Solomon, a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a bright yellow top and several gold necklaces, including a large hoop earring. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a window showing greenery outside.

MEDIA KIT

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ABOUT JEWEL

Jewel Burks Solomon is a leading entrepreneur, investor, and advocate for diversity and inclusion in technology. As an experienced tech leader, she has dedicated her career to championing underrepresented voices and driving innovation in the industry. Jewel brings a wealth of experience as a successful founder, angel investor, venture capitalist and former corporate executive. Jewel is also a prominent speaker, sharing her insights on topics like the racial wealth gap, access to capital, and collaboration in business.

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- Growing from Idea to Exit
- Raising Capital
- Building Collaborative Teams
- Work-Life Harmony
- Faith-Driven Leadership
- Building Generational Wealth



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



40K

[THIS FOUNDER SOLD HER START-UP TO AMAZON AT 27 — NOW AS HEAD OF GOOGLE FOR STARTUPS US, SHE'S HELPING GIVE BACK](#)



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[BLACK FOUNDER-FOCUSED COLLAB CAPITAL CLOSES FIRST \\$50 MILLION FUND WITH IMPRESSIVE LIST OF LPS](#)



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[THE BLACK INVESTORS WHO ARE CHANGING THE VC INDUSTRY](#)
[COLLAB CAPITAL HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL CASE STUDY](#)

EXIT INTERVIEW

Reliable Source

Jewel Burks Solomon launched Partpic, a startup that makes it easier to find industrial parts, in 2013, after she'd fielded one too many angry customer calls at a previous job. Soon, it was Amazon on the phone—with an acquisition offer.
By Yasmin Gagné

Where did the idea for Partpic come from?

I started my career at Google in California, but after a couple of years there, I decided to move closer to home, to Atlanta. I got a job at McMaster-Carr, an industrial-parts distributor. We had thousands of parts, but I found working in customer service that people often didn't know what these parts were called or how to describe them. I thought there had to be a way to organize all the products so they could be searched easily. That led me to found Partpic, a way for customers to search for and order parts using computer-vision technology on their smartphone.



↑
PRIME MOVER
Solomon sold Atlanta-based Partpic to Amazon for an undisclosed amount in 2016.

Did you consider returning to Silicon Valley to start the company?

Silicon Valley is not the be all and end all. When I was fundraising, potential investors told me I should move there, but I was firm about wanting to stay in Atlanta. In the end, we were able to go so much further with our money and take advantage of the incredible talent pool at Georgia Tech.

When did you seek outside funding, and when did you decide to sell?

We originally bootstrapped, and then we raised a \$2 million seed round. We were trying to raise a second round but weren't happy with the conditions that investors wanted to set—I was worried about growing too fast and giving up too much control. Amazon came to us around that time and said it wanted to acquire us. We weren't looking to sell right at that point. But we had always thought about selling, and the offer was good, so we decided to do it.

You stayed with Amazon after the sale. How tough was the transition from being a founder?

It's been hard. It was definitely an adjustment to go from working for myself to working for a big company, but I'm happy I can continue some of the work that we started with Partpic. And outside of my job, I do angel investing and mentor other female entrepreneurs. My advice to them is, if you can, decide in advance whether you want to sell your company. Then, if an offer comes, you will be really prepared.

Jewel Burks – Entrepreneur



Jewel Burks works every day to try to make the tech industry more diverse and accessible, but first and foremost she's an entrepreneur. MICHELLE GROSCHOPF

Jewel Burks works every day to try to make the tech industry more diverse and accessible to all people, of every gender, race, nationality, age, and socio-economic level. But Burks is a maker, first and foremost. WIRED featured her in our 25th anniversary issue as someone who will “shake up the next 25 years” of tech. She was nominated by Reddit and Initialized Capital cofounder Alexis Ohanian, who first met Burks when she launched a cutting-edge computer vision app called Partpic. Partpic lets you use a smartphone to snap a picture of a mechanical part you need to replace, and then it helps you order those parts. Though Burks had no background in computer vision, she recognized there was a need for such an app and taught herself how to build it. Partpic went on to raise more than \$2 million in venture capital—especially notable given that women, and especially women of color, often face difficulty getting funded. Burks then sold the company to Amazon, where its technology is used to power replacement-part searches in Amazon’s shopping app. Burks now leads a team inside Amazon and advocates for racial and gender inclusion in her industry.

Three Keys To Succeeding in Business From a Black Woman in Tech Who Soared

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BY JEWEL BURKS SOLOMON · UPDATED DECEMBER 6, 2020

Since I sold my startup, *Partpic* to Amazon, I've spent a lot of time reflecting on my journey as an entrepreneur. There are three elements I now know are keys to succeeding in business: understanding your customer, launching your business at the right time, and having a great support system.

Know Your Customer

The number one piece of advice I have for [aspiring entrepreneurs](#) is to do *customer discovery* before building. Many entrepreneurs fall in love with an idea before they've truly validated a problem. Serial entrepreneurs and authors Steve Blank and Eric Ries popularized the concept of *customer discovery*, which is the process of creating a hypothesis about your solution, questioning potential customers, and refining your hypothesis based on your learnings. Customer discovery is *not* asking your friends if they like your idea. Most of your friends will say "yes." Instead, you have to ask people you *don't* know. If you are already in business, it's still critical to constantly interview your customers to ensure your product or service is meeting their needs and expectations.





The Real Work from Gold Series featuring Jewel Burks

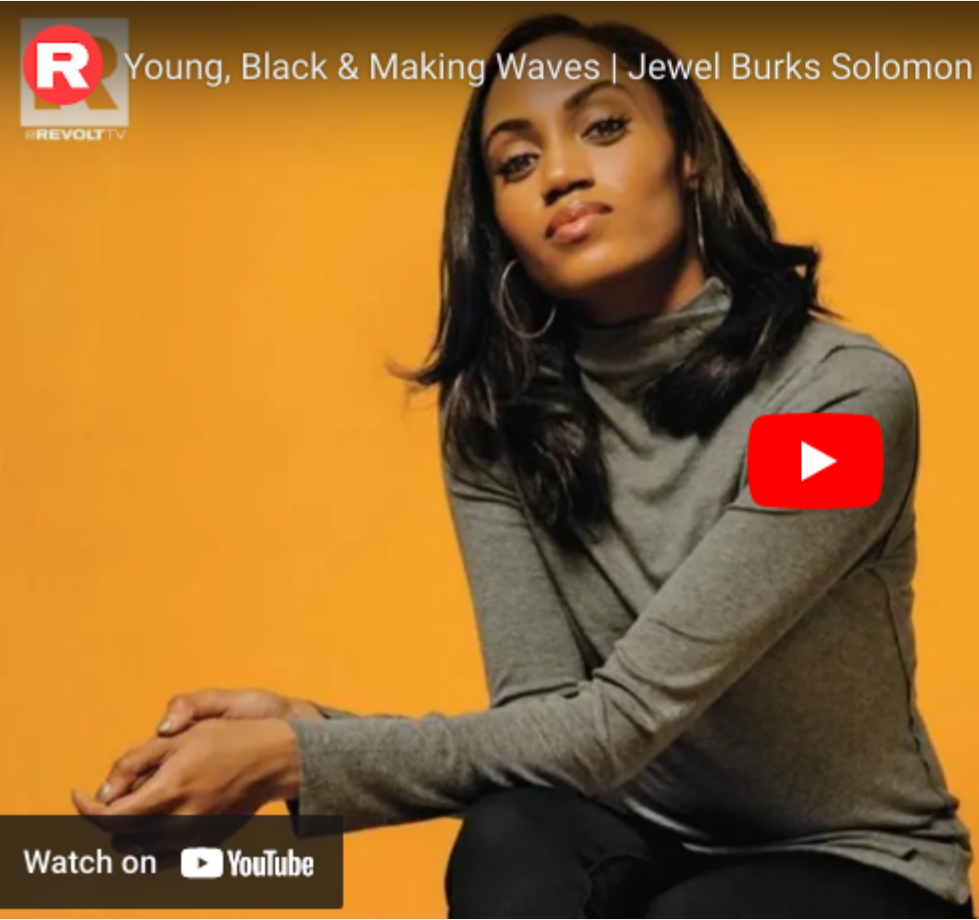


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