



a BRANDI MITCHELL film

# POINT AND DRIVE®

WORK HARD, OR WORK HARDER. THOSE WERE THE OPTIONS.

## PRESS KIT



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## SCREENING AND BOOKING

### INFO:

Brandi Mitchell

Koris Publishing, LLC

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A film by Brandi Mitchell  
90 Minutes | English | 2016  
[PointAndDriveMovie.com](http://PointAndDriveMovie.com)

## ABOUT THE FILM

POINT AND DRIVE is a documentary that presents the passion, talents, history, struggles and triumphs of the most imitated marching band of all time, The Florida A&M University Marching 100 from the voices of its successful alumni spanning over four decades. It also shows the beauty and anatomy of the Historically Black College and University [HBCU] halftime show which the Marching 100's founder, Dr. William P. Foster innovated, and chronicles the bands growth and influence on young adults from all societal backgrounds to attend its universities campuses; forever changing our lives, culture and traditions.

Point and Drive provides a touching view of how kids are introduced to music and marching band at a time when many other distractions are presented to lure them away from greatness, and how for some it was their ticket to going to college, building a successful career, even saving their lives.

Starring Grammy Winning Jazz legends like Scotty Barnhart, Wycliffe Gordon and Vincent Gardner, all of whom are alumni of the ground-breaking marching band, and popular artists like Dwele, Point and Drive explores this tightly-knit, underground culture that is the marching band. Shot over a three-year time period with unprecedented access, the film intimately explores what it takes to make the band, how it's founder Dr. William P. Foster formed the band at the height of segregation, it's historic rise, unexpected fall, and comeback after a 2011 hazing death which almost stopped the music from playing - indefinitely.

Through original interviews, music, live performances, dancing and rare archival footage and images, we learn that the process of mastering Point and Drive, which is actually the form of precision marching that makes the famed band so eye catching, is so much more - it transfers into an innate bar of excellence that is the measurement and standard for success in their lives.

Woven through this marching band all access pass is the thread of the life and legacy of Florida A&M's renowned Band Director, Dr. William P. Foster who is credited with creating the first dance routine in a halftime show in 1946 and developing at least thirty new marching band techniques used in high school and college bands across the nation.

Point and Drive tells the story of how the vision and passion of one soul can shape the lives of many, and the necessity of fighting to sustain what you believe in - no matter what happens. It is a story for people of all ages, one that will inspire, educate, and provoke a spirit of excellence.

The documentary film is directed by three-time author and first time feature filmmaker Brandi Mitchell who played in the famed Florida A&M Marching Band and now continues the tradition through her son who is following in her footsteps of playing in the marching band.



# THE CAST (partial list)



**DWELE**

Three- time Grammy  
nominated Recording Artist,  
Songwriter, and Producer



**KEVIN BURCH**

IT Leader, Sales  
Technologies



**SCOTTY BARNHART**

Two- time Grammy Winner,  
Director of The Count Basie  
Orchestra



**WYCLIFFE GORDON**

Renowned Trombonist |  
Trombonist of the Year



**BERNARD KINSEY**

Philanthropist,  
Owner-The Kinsey Collection



**BRANDI MITCHELL**

President | KORIS Media,  
Producer, Author



**VINCENT GARDNER**

Lead Trombonist -  
Jazz at Lincoln Center,  
Professor, Northwestern



**CHEF RICHARD INGRAHAM**

Personal Celebrity Chef,  
President RLI Enterprises



**DR. JULIAN E. WHITE**

Retired Director of Bands  
Florida A&M University



**LINDSAY B. SARJEANT**

Arranger, Chairman of Music  
Dept. FAMU



**DR. SHELBY CHIPMAN**

Asst. Director of Bands and  
Wind Ensemble, FAMU



**NATHAN HAYMER**

Director of Bands,  
Southern University



# THE CAST



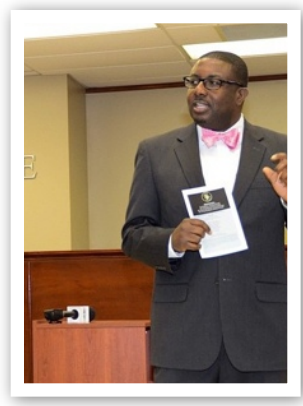
**L. SPENCER SMITH**  
Pastor, Recording Artist,  
Author



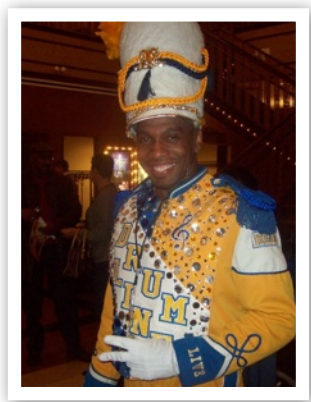
**WALEED SHAMSID-DEEN**  
Entrepreneur, Author,  
Philanthropist



**JOE BULLARD**  
The Voice of the 100, Radio  
Personality



**DR. JERMAINE FLEMING**  
Principal,  
Innovative Educator



**BRIAN SNELL**  
Executive Band Consultant and  
Casting | Actor, Drumline Films



**DON ROBERTS**  
Creator and Director of the  
Intl' Theatrical Production,  
DRUMLine Live



**RAY "QUASI" NELSON JR.**  
Professional Percussionist,  
Count Basie Orchestra



**CHUCK MALDONADO**  
Choreographer for  
Television, Film



**LASHAWN GARY**  
Recording Artist and Musician



**EDWIN SLYVAIN**  
Radio Personality



**DR. CHRISTOPHER  
RODGERS**  
Sales Manager | Professor

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## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR - BRANDI MITCHELL

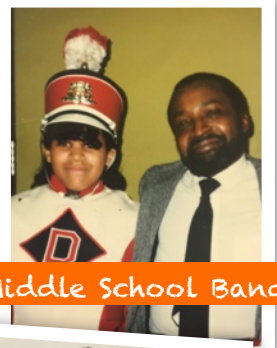
Brandi Mitchell is the owner of KORIS Publishing, a multi-faceted publishing and media company which helps to monetize the messages, intellectual property, and personas of great brands to it's audience through producing high caliber content in television, film, print, and digital media. Brandi holds a degree in Psychology from Florida A&M University and is a three-time author which has given her the national platform as a sought after speaker and lifestyle expert.

Brandi began her career in entertainment as a celebrity makeup and hair artist working on numerous projects for TLC, TBS, BET, MTV, and TV ONE with a diverse group of talent including Steve Harvey, Ruby Dee, Anthony Mackie, Eric Benet, to Eminem. But it was her behind the scenes exposure and intrigue to production that allowed her to transition into exploring directing and producing. Her collaborative learning experiences grant her the distinguishing edge to think out of the box, make a project marketable, and bring authentic truth to an audience to empower them to take action or see subjects in their true light.

Brandi took on the herculean task of independently creating, producing, directing, and financing Point and Drive®, which she credits as her greatest teacher in the film industry. Brandi got the inspiration to create Point and Drive while sitting in the homegoing service of her beloved band director of the Florida A&M University Marching 100, Dr. William P. Foster. It was in that service that she realized she felt the same way just 5 years previously at her high school band directors homegoing, Mr. Bobby L. Brown - that the power and brilliance of who they were needed to be celebrated and that a story on who you become because of music should have it's voice. She knew it would only be a matter of time before she had to tell the story of what the band meant to her and thousands of band members across the globe.

“ You always hear people say that “they” should do this, or that”, I believe that the “they” that you’re referring to is usually YOU, says Brandi. “I believe that when you feel or see a need to help or in this instance, tell a story, you need to step up and be a part of the solution. Telling our story in Point and Drive was my part in helping to preserve the beauty of music education and honor the marching band, it’s teachers, and it’s schools and universities which have helped to make me, and so many of my colleagues who we are today”.

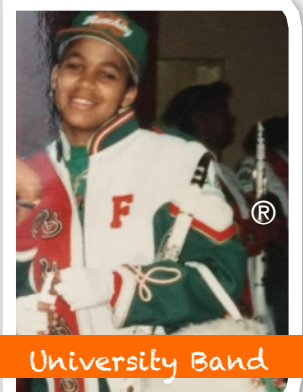
Brandi counts her family as her greatest accomplishment having been married for 18 years and the mother of three. She spends her time producing, developing content, speaking, and consulting through her company KORIS Publishing as well as philanthropic work for music education and career development.



Middle School Band



High School Band



University Band





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## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My reason for doing this documentary film is simple; band has always been a part of my life – a very important part. I grew up in Detroit, and at age 9, my fourth grade band teacher Mr. Duke at Carver Elementary introduced me to music. After trying some instruments out in class, I rushed home, called my father, and asked if he could buy me a flute. That weekend my Dad brought me a black box with not a flute, but a clarinet– you see the clarinets were cheaper to rent! I spent all my time after school trying to figure out how to make that clarinet sing. Surprisingly I was pretty much a natural, and could play very well by ear. Thirty - three years later I am still in awe and forever grateful that because someone gave me an opportunity to play an instrument in a band class – it would change my entire life.

By middle school I was introduced to my second band teacher, Mr. Nicholson at Drew Middle School – a graduate of Tennessee State University. He introduced us to playing popular music as well as marching and playing in parades. I was 13 when I saw my first HBCU band - that's Historically Black College and University Band. It was a special HBCU game in Detroit between my middle school band director's alma mater The Tennessee State Aristocrats and what would be my high school band teacher's alma mater The Southern University Human Jukebox. As both bands marched down Woodward Avenue, they looked like musical giants. I had never heard or seen anything like it before, but recognized a kinship to the bands.

By the time I hit high school, I went to a catholic high school – and joined the band. I didn't like the school because of my experiences, but more importantly, I hated the band. Maybe it was because I never fit in with the school or the band. Meanwhile in my neighborhood, I would rush home to go to my neighborhoods high school bands practice The Mackenzie High School Band of Renown. You could hear the band and the drumline playing from blocks away. The band director, Mr. Bobby Brown, was like the Pied Piper, all the kids would follow him – from thug, to drug dealer, to football player. Somehow this neighborhood band led by this extraordinary man had brought an entire community together at 3:35pm for a two hour practice where the focus was the band - no violence - just the band.

I begged my Mom and Dad to let me go to Mackenzie High the following year so I could be in the band – and promised I would continue to get really good grades. By that summer I was trying out for the famous Mackenzie Band of Renown, and the rest as they say is history. Mackenzie's Band director, Mr. Bobby L. Brown patterned his high school band off of the Southern University Marching Band. More than that, he had sent nearly 40 kids to school on band scholarships – something that was unheard of in the Midwest. He also took us on band trips to HBCU's. He knew that if we could see "ourselves" on those campuses, it could change our lives – and it did.

I went on to attend Florida A&M University to major in Business, but I was drawn to the school from – you guessed it – the band. To this day I still say making the Florida A&M University Marching 100 was one of the hardest things I have ever done. In fact on my band shirt, I had a simple quote – "The Race is Given to the One Who Endures Until the End". I had no idea what world of greatness I was stepping into as a kid from Detroit – but I'm so glad that I hung in there – because the payoff was extraordinary – and it still is. Making the FAMU Marching 100 was like making the All Star team. As a freshman I joined the ranks of those from across the nation who were the top of class musically and academically. These kids became my confidants, best friends, sisters, brothers and teammates. And if we had a "Dad" it would be Dr. William P. Foster along with a group of mentors in Dr. Julian White, Professor Lindsay Sarjeant, Professor Charles Bing, and Dr. Shaylor James or as many called them "The Foster Five". And what role models they became.

Now as a wife and a mother to a young man who has just found his own love for the band and to whom I get the privilege of experiencing "band life" through his eyes, I can see in even greater form the benefits of a life filled with music. I'm an unapologetic "Band Mom" now and loving it. It is because of my son and his generation - who has more and more negative influences- that I also present Point and Drive as a reminder to THEM of who they can become through music.



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## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT CONT'D

While this story is centered on my experiences, it is a universal one. In fact if you ask any band member from any school they will have similar feelings. Band simply generates this type of experience. FAMU's band just so happens to be the innovator of the halftime show and thus the building block of which many band programs were made from which is the reason I am so grateful to have witnessed its brilliance for myself. I am sure that many people will see their band directors and teachers in Point and Drive too, because to be a band director takes a certain recipe of father figure, tough love, compassion, and drive.

This intimate experience of band life coupled with a spirit of gratitude is why I committed to taking this inside look into the marching band world with Point and Drive. It was inspired by the death of my band directors Mr. Brown and Dr. Foster. While I sat in their funerals, five years apart, I found myself having the same feeling – I wanted to express my gratitude for the journey they led me on.

That expression of gratitude became Point and Drive.

Initially when starting production for Point and Drive I thought it was a book. Having written three books, it was a familiar lane. I did the first interview in September 2011 with two of my band brothers from Florida A&M with the intent on getting the majority of the interviews at the last game of the season – The Florida Classic in Orlando that November. Because of a family emergency however, I sold my ticket and planned on doing the interviews later that next year.

But with one event, everything changed. At that very game, our world changed forever when a FAMU Drum Major, Robert Champion was killed in a hazing incident.

It. Changed. Everything.

Now the once celebrated band, had a scarlet letter, and most heartbreaking, one of our family members was gone and a group of kid's lives would never be the same. The next months to follow the media ate the band alive, they painted us as thugs, and brutes, you name it. It was a far cry from the previous labels we had carried for nearly seven decades of "America's Band", and "The most imitated band in the world".

As a mother I was torn; I couldn't imagine nor would I ever want to imagine that loss.

As an alumni member - I felt helpless.

As someone who felt commissioned to tell this story albeit two months before this even happened – I felt obligated.

In a larger societal story, the next months to follow our communities would be shaken as we saw the rise of young men and women of color being senselessly killed within their own communities and in police cases, and heightened terror threats globally. Never has there been a time where our youth needed direction, hope and positive influencers than now. For my friends and I growing up in inner cities, the band was that influence. The leaders we became as a result was the band and universities dividend.

I hope that every viewer of Point and Drive walks away with greater hope, pride, clarity, love, and a boost of drive. That it shows the beauty of the marching band and gives insight as to our beautiful bond that has in some cases been misunderstood or minimized to a "good show" at a halftime game. That it shows the difference between discipline, hard work, and hazing; that it honors those band teachers that work hard to teach our kids, and celebrates the band teachers that directly effected my life so greatly. That it shows the countless success stories of men and women who have used the foundation of what they learned in the marching band to create better communities, work environments, and families.

That after the credits role, it will encourage us all to march to the same beat. We are Point and Drive.

**Respectfully Submitted in Gratitude,**

**Brandi Mitchell**

**Producer, Director Point and Drive Documentary**



# REVIEWS

**“Point & Drive is a moving historical and cultural documentary about the dynamic and unique role music and band life play in shaping purpose and character in a young person's life.”**

**C. DENISE HENDRICKS | Senior TV Producer, HLN**

**“Through the viewpoint of the high stepping marching band, Point & Drive is an inspiring story that gives viewers a taste of the excitement, pride and fierce sense of community that embody the HBCU experience and leaves you hungry for more.”**

**NIKKI WEBBER ALLEN| Emmy Award Winning Producer**

**“In her directorial debut, Brandi Mitchell has created a ground breaking documentary that displays the beauty, pageantry and excellence which is the HBCU Marching band experience. As a graduate of Florida A&M University, I understand the importance the Marching 100 plays in underscoring the pride and tradition of the school. This documentary goes beyond the superficial and tells a story from the mouths of former band members of how bands have developed character, provided opportunities and changed lives for the better.”**

**NICK F. NELSON | LIQUID SOUL, CMO | Entertainment Marketing Strategist**

**“Point and Drive is masterful. It tells the story of the FAMU Marching 100 in a way that draws you in and keeps you riveted to the screen until the last scene. We learn that Point and Drive is not only a style of marching, it is a mindset, a way of being that not only equips the members of the Marching 100 to be an exemplary marching band, it also equipped them to be exemplary people in life. It demonstrated how the vision and passion of one soul can shape the lives of many, and the necessity of fighting to sustain what you believe in no matter what happens. It is a story for people of all ages, one that will both inspire and provoke.”**

**RENEE V. WALLACE | CEO, Doers Consulting Alliance**

**“As an educator for over 18 years, I have witnessed the positive effects of music programs in schools. Point and Drive provides insight into a culture that not only expands the knowledge base of our students, but provides them with possibilities they may have never known before.”**

**DONIELLE BROWN | Educator**

**“Point and drive is a phenomenal masterpiece that captures the band culture and how music was the vehicle to open a new world up for students, inspire them to strive for excellence, and provide them an experience and standard which would launch them into successful careers and callings. This documentary reminds us how no matter where you are from or where you start, being of excellence and living in your passion can support your dreams and aspirations as you stay the course.”**

**MELISSA HUGHES | Founder, Live Rich. Spread Wealth**

**"Point & Drive takes a comprehensive look into the culture and experience of HBCU Marching Bands. This film covers the unique marching styles, arrangements and brotherhood/sisterhood formed for a lifetime."**

**BRAD BROWN | Project Manager**

# PRESS



[rollingout.com](http://rollingout.com)

[shadow league](http://shadowleague)

## CBS Atlanta



[thehbcureport](http://thehbcureport)

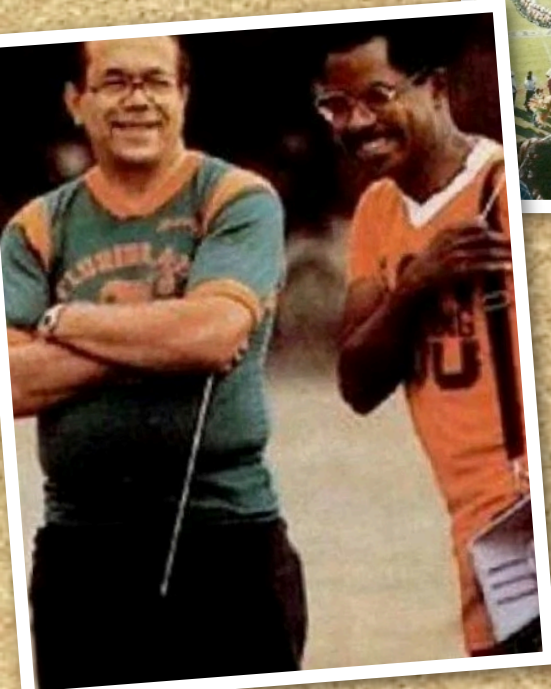


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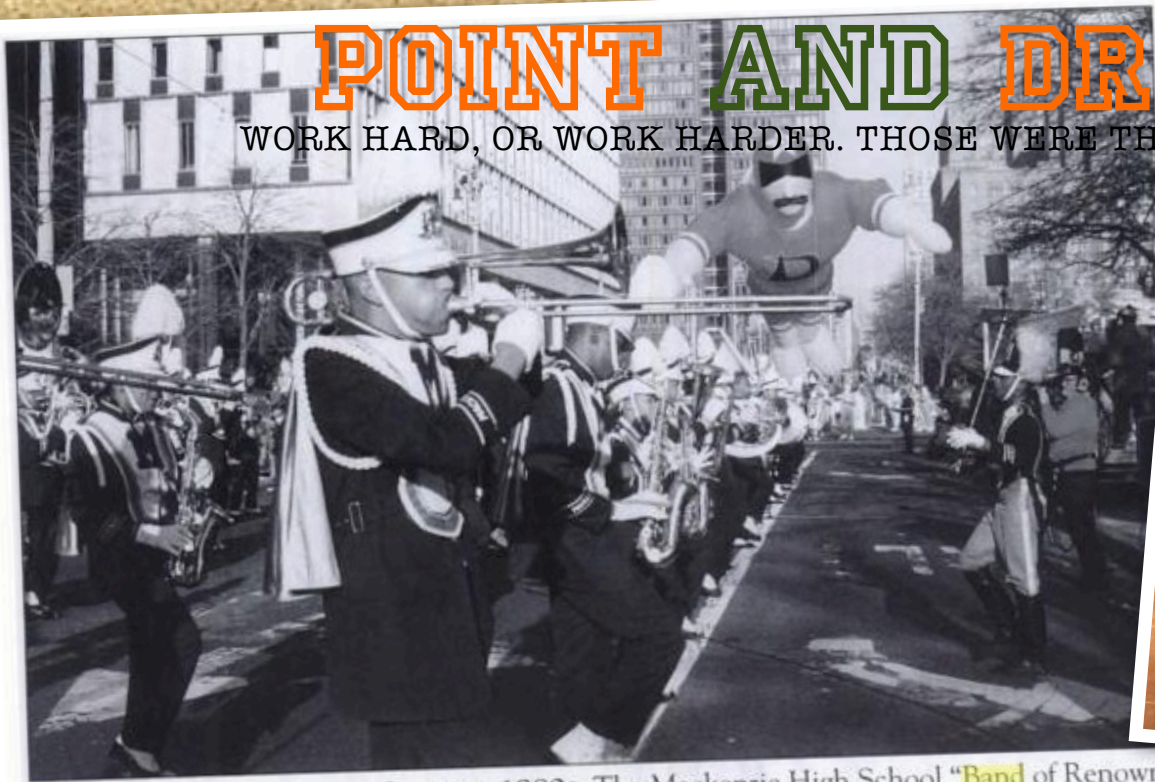
Dr. Foster, Dr. White and Mr. Bing, wait the game, 1981





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**DETROIT** MACKENZIE HIGH SCHOOL, 1980s. The Mackenzie High School "Band of Renown" performed for the television cameras in front of Santa's Castle. Each band in The Parade has approximately one minute in front of television cameras to show their moves to more than one million fans watching The Parade at home. (Courtesy of The Parade Company Archival Collection.)





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## KEYNOTES/SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TOPICS

Charismatic, Passionate and Genuine are words used to describe Brandi and her approach to delivering effective, thought provoking, informative messages. All of Brandi's speaking aims to create a positive change in the way people see themselves or inspires people to live up to their potential. She reinforces this message through offering her audiences proven lifestyle solutions that lead to greatly increased confidence in everyday life. Each Brandi Mitchell speaking event, offers the attendees ideas capable of transforming their lives for the better, and provides the physical and mental tools to activate their change.



### **HAVING POINT AND DRIVE: THE MARCHING BAND FACTOR:**

**How unwavering focus and relentless drive in your work and life can turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.**

Will you answer the demand of excellence or quit? Brandi believes that greatness happens when you push pass being comfortable, so if you are not scared while doing something new, you probably aren't playing a big enough game! When you're put in a pool of greatness you have two choices: either sink or swim. In this transparent and entertaining keynote, Brandi shares the life lessons she learned on the marching band field as a member of the nations greatest marching band taken from her documentary film Point and Drive to illustrate how those principles condition you for success in life. From having the ability to push pass obstacles, operating in humility while maintaining integrity and self-worth, and being bold enough to play with those who intimidate you so that you can go to your next level, Brandi teaches how these lessons can apply to growth in any area from leadership, finances, entrepreneurship, sales, and self-confidence - creating the avenue for promotion, fulfillment, and successful relationships.

### **PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT PERFORMANCE:**

**How it's practice not talent alone that makes you great**

It's not always the talented that win, it's the most practiced. Sometimes, even the underdog. Why? They are hungry and have something to prove; mostly to themselves. And not just any kind of practice, but practicing like you're doing the actual performance, every time. Many of the people we look up to and that we want to model did not become great because they were naturally inclined. As a matter of fact, those who have mastered their art or trade will tell you that it was something that they practiced perfectly to the point where it appeared to their audience as natural. They have a system that they repeat over and over to yield their desired results and make what they do seem effortless. Brandi shares 5 things that great "performers" do to guarantee they have memorable performances and how you can apply it to your goals, career and life. Her talk is based on her documentary feature film Point and Drive.

BRANDI HAS WORKED WITH OR BEEN FEATURED IN:



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## KEYNOTES/SUGGESTED INTERVIEW TOPICS



### REIGNITE THE DRIVE: HOW TO MOVE FORWARD BY REVISITING THE PAST How to Use Your Past Wins to Propel You Forward in Your Career and Life

Do you long for the days when you believed anything was possible in your career or life? Have you ever felt that you may be off track and are presenting to the world only a fraction of your true potential? Do you feel like you want to find the person who exercised child-like faith in terms of the fulfillment of their dreams? Do you find yourself thinking "I'm too old for change" or are you held hostage by "security" alone versus growth or purpose? Brandi will teach you how to stop living with regret, and instead reignite your inner drive by identifying and drawing from past wins to provide strength and fuel for your next phase in life. In this keynote, Brandi talks about how she used these very same techniques both personally and professionally to accomplish huge goals over the last two years; from losing 80 lbs to repositioning herself professionally midlife in her career. Her reoccurring theme was a great win from her college days: "If I made The Marching 100, I can do anything!" In this authentic fireside chat, Brandi provides the ammunition to help you propel yourself forward by owning and visualizing your past wins and building the mindset and habits to move forward - right now! Her talk is based on her groundbreaking documentary film Point and Drive.

For bookings inquiries contact:  
[brandimitchell@brandimitchell.com](mailto:brandimitchell@brandimitchell.com)

BRANDI HAS WORKED WITH OR BEEN FEATURED IN:





# POINT AND DRIVE®

a documentary feature film by Brandi Mitchell

## CONTACT

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