

Tess Rollins, Acknowledged by Influential Women, Advances Community-Centered Design and Civic Engagement

CHATTANOOGA, TN, UNITED STATES, July 10, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Creative Strategist and Community Leader Drives Downtown Revitalization Through Placemaking, Branding, and Civic Engagement

Creative Strategist and Community Builder Tess Rollins Expands Impact Through Branding, Placemaking, and Entrepreneurial Leadership

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — Tess Rollins, Creative Strategist, Founder of Simply Enhance, and Director of Programs & Events at River City Company, continues to shape downtown Chattanooga through innovative community engagement, placemaking, strategic branding, and entrepreneurial leadership.



With a career spanning graphic design, advertising, brand strategy, corporate sports technology, entrepreneurship, and nonprofit leadership, Rollins brings a multidisciplinary perspective to economic development and civic engagement. Her work centers on activating public spaces, strengthening local business ecosystems, and creating experiences that foster meaningful human connection. At the heart of her approach is the belief that thriving communities are built through intentional storytelling, authentic collaboration, and inclusive engagement.

As Director of Programs & Events at River City Company, Rollins develops and leads initiatives that advance downtown revitalization, cultural programming, public space activation, and small business engagement. Working collaboratively across public, private, and nonprofit sectors, she designs programs that are visually compelling while strategically aligned with long-term economic and community development goals. Her emphasis on people-centered design ensures

that public experiences are welcoming, accessible, and impactful.

Through River City Company's Emerging Producers cohort, Rollins shares her expertise with aspiring placemaking event producers, equipping them with the knowledge and practical tools needed to create successful community-centered events. Since relocating to Chattanooga, she has expanded the nonprofit's curriculum to include hands-on instruction in event planning, placemaking, sponsorship development, budgeting, logistics, marketing, public safety, accessibility, community engagement, and collaborative leadership. By mentoring participants through both classroom instruction and one-on-one guidance, she is helping cultivate the next generation of event producers who understand not only how to produce exceptional experiences, but also how those experiences positively impact residents, small businesses, and Chattanooga's economic vitality.

Rollins believes that relocation should never be viewed as an obstacle to building meaningful relationships or creating lasting impact. After relocating from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area to the Greater Chattanooga region, she intentionally immersed herself in the community, approaching every conversation as an opportunity to listen, learn, and connect. In fewer than two years, her commitment to authentic engagement led to her selection for and graduation from Leadership Chattanooga, widely regarded as the region's premier leadership development program. Through genuine curiosity, service, and collaboration, Rollins has cultivated meaningful relationships across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. She believes the strongest professional networks are built not through transactions, but through authentic human connection, trust, and a sincere investment in the success of others.

In addition to her nonprofit leadership, Rollins is the Founder and Chief Creative Cultivator of Simply Enhance, a brand identity and marketing strategy consulting firm established in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and later relocated to Chattanooga. What began as a local public access television program highlighting creative entrepreneurs and hidden-gem small businesses evolved into a consulting practice dedicated to helping organizations become visible to become—and remain viable. Through Simply Enhance, she partners with entrepreneurs, nonprofits, and small businesses to clarify their brand identity, strengthen marketing strategy, and develop messaging that resonates with their audiences. Drawing upon decades of experience in advertising, graphic design, and content development, she specializes in transforming complex ideas into compelling stories that inspire engagement and sustainable growth.

Throughout her career, Rollins has remained committed to empowering others through creativity, collaboration, and communication. She is especially passionate about supporting entrepreneurs, championing women in business, and mentoring emerging leaders. Having successfully navigated corporate, entrepreneurial, and nonprofit sectors, she brings a unique perspective on resilience, adaptability, and purpose-driven leadership.

Her professional expertise is complemented by extensive coaching and leadership training,

including multiple coaching licenses through the U.S. Soccer Federation, Soccer Referee certification, and youth coaching credentials through the Tackle Coach Certification and Heads Up Football program. Rollins has also served on numerous nonprofit and youth sports boards of directors, as a wrestling commissioner, and as a player evaluator for the U.S. Olympic Development Program. These experiences reinforced the importance of teamwork, servant leadership, discipline, and cultivating environments where individuals and organizations can succeed together.

Rollins credits much of her success to one simple principle: listening first. She believes effective leadership begins with understanding not only what people say, but the experiences, aspirations, and motivations behind their words. For Rollins, storytelling is more than communication—it is a catalyst for building trust, strengthening relationships, and inspiring people to become invested in their communities.

Her leadership philosophy is deeply rooted in the example set by her mother, an entrepreneur who immigrated from the Philippines and built a successful career in healthcare and residential care home development. Lessons such as “You sit, you rot” and “Listen to connect” continue to influence Rollins’ approach to leadership, encouraging decisive action, empathy, curiosity, and lifelong learning.

When mentoring young women entering the creative, marketing, and community development professions, Rollins encourages intentional relationship-building, authentic communication, and maintaining balance between professional ambition and personal well-being. She also remains a strong advocate for handwritten notes—what she affectionately calls “paper hugs”—believing that small, thoughtful gestures continue to strengthen meaningful relationships in an increasingly digital world.

Looking ahead, Rollins remains committed to helping small businesses overcome one of their greatest challenges: inconsistent branding and fragmented messaging that limit growth and visibility. She also sees tremendous opportunity in community development initiatives that activate public spaces, strengthen neighborhood identity, support entrepreneurs, and create places where residents and visitors alike can gather, connect, and thrive.

Whether leading transformational downtown initiatives, mentoring the next generation of placemaking event producers, or helping entrepreneurs discover and articulate their brand story, Tess Rollins believes lasting impact begins with people. Through creativity, collaboration, and service, she continues to champion a vision of community development where strong brands, vibrant public spaces, and authentic relationships work together to build stronger, more connected communities.

Learn More about Tess Rollins:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/tess-rollins>

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