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Faithea Flowers

Premium content from St. Louis Business Journal by Greg Edwards, Reporter

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Vice president of strategic initiatives, CitiMortgage

Faithea Flowers was inspired to study business by her Uncle Richard, a Vietnam veteran who owned a barber shop in her hometown of Hopewell, Va.

"His shop was a local landmark, and while I had no desire to cut men's hair, I did have a desire to own my own business," said Flowers, 36.

She pursued her interest in business in college. "I enjoyed my studies so much that I started thinking about getting an M.B.A.," she said, "but my professors suggested I gain a little work experience first."

She got that experience working four years in the Washington, D.C., area for Andersen Consulting, now Accenture. Soon though, "I was itching to get back to school."

She found the right fit here at the Washington University's Olin School of Business. "I found some of the same characteristics as my hometown," she said. "It was friendly and not cut throat. And the professors were similar to my James Madison professors, with an open-door policy."

After graduating, she was selected as one of the first Citi Home Equity management associates, exposing her to various parts of the business in a two-year rotation.

Ultimately, her own experience as a homebuyer led her to **CitiMortgage**, where she supervises the first-time buyer, low- and moderate-income and multi-demographic