

ATLANTA BUSINESS CHRONICLE

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

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STRATEGIES • SECTION B



WHO'S WHO

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WINE & DINE

Caleb Hopkins appreciates the depth of Sicilian wines.

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The Insider

Tim Lowe and Dan Cathy at the Four Pillar Tribute.

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North American to remake Colony Square

"Somebody with vision like North American with fresh capital could truly turn this into Rockefeller Center," says Jim Meyer of Atlantic Capital Properties.

PHOTO/
JOANN VITELLI



BY DOUGLAS SAMs AND AMY WENK
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North American Properties is emerging as the front-runner to buy and redevelop Colony Square, the project that more than 40 years ago launched mixed-use development in the South and helped turn Midtown from a seedy hub of Atlanta counterculture to a mainstream arts and cultural district.

Cincinnati-based North American Properties is coming off the successful turnaround

of another well-known Midtown mixed-use project, Atlantic Station, which recently sold for just short of \$200 million after an extensive repositioning with new retail tenants and events.

North American is forming a joint venture with a large institutional investor to acquire Colony Square, though it's unclear who its partner is. It joined with **CBRE Global** on the turnaround of Atlantic Station.

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COVER STORY



Why business relies on Atlanta's data centers

Cheap land and power, robust fiber network give city a big space in the cloud.

STORY BY Urvaksh Karkaria, 20A

'PIGGY BANK'

\$200M PROTON THERAPY CENTER FACES NEW QUESTIONS

BY DOUGLAS SAMs AND ELLIE HENSLEY
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A Texas billionaire is claiming millions of dollars of his money was fraudulently used to develop the **Emory Proton Therapy Center** now under construction in midtown Atlanta.

Kelcy Warren, founder of Dallas-based natural gas pipeline giant **Energy Transfer Partners**, claims in Texas court filings the developer of the Emory Proton Therapy Center, **Advanced Particle Therapy LLC** of San Diego, Calif., improperly transferred \$40 million, much of it from Warren. The proceeds were allegedly used as a "piggy bank" to fund other proton therapy centers.

"APT then transferred the funds it took from [business entities in Dallas] to its separate entities in Baltimore and Atlanta, where the funds were presumably used to develop those separate proton therapy centers," Warren claims in a Sept. 24 court filing in federal bankruptcy court in Dallas.

APT's proton therapy center in Dallas filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Sept. 17. Warren had loaned \$20 million to APT for that center.

Warren's claims are another challenge for the \$200 million Atlanta project,

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SPECIAL SECTION



Making the connection: Helping Atlanta soar

The Corporate Volunteer Council of Atlanta's (CVC) annual IMPACT Awards honors local companies' dedication to service.

WINE & DINE

Hopkins appreciates depth of Sicilian wines

BY JOANN VITELLI
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Q&A

Caleb Hopkins was working at Druid Hills Golf Club when a friend talked him into competing in a blind wine-tasting competition. The

friend was Michael McNeill, master sommelier; the competition, the Annual Man (Or Woman!) vs. Wine. Hopkins took home top honors among the other nine sommeliers.

"I ended up winning it and that was a game-changer for me," said Hopkins. "I knew then that I needed to focus on what I love to do."

Hopkins was in charge of 100-plus employees, running four restaurants and two bars at the golf club. He signed up to take the level three sommelier certification test but after he failed it, he realized he needed to make a career change to a smaller, more concentrated wine and beverage position.

Hopkins joined **Atlas** restaurant at **The St. Regis Atlanta** last December to work with chef Christopher Grossman, building the wine list from scratch. He first began doing tastings without the food to assess the character of a wine.

Grossman's "vision of food was very much to create dishes with more subtle flavors," said Hopkins. "I really wanted to create a wine list broken up by region and pick producers who were good representatives of subtle flavors."

Hopkins had an extensive working knowledge of wines. The time he spent working as a beverage director/sommelier in Maui was similar to Atlas in that it was a chef-driven, high-end dining room, he said.

"There I learned how to sell wine," said Hopkins. "There were 600 wines I had to memorize on the spot and sell. I learned how to study. I would be quizzed by the guests on every wine on the list from where it's from to how it's made."

After leaving Maui, Hopkins backpacked in wine-making regions in Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Germany and Switzerland. Most surprising, he said, was learning about the quality of wines from Portugal. He was also impressed with Spain's variety of wine. But it was while he was traveling down the Rhine River that Hopkins recalls being most awestruck.

"These people are farming with ropes tied around their waists," said Hopkins. "Their vineyards are growing out of the side of rock and they're such tiny vines producing great Rieslings. You just can't recreate that."

Q: What new wines have you recently discovered? Sicily has always gotten a bad reputation because of Marsala and mass production, but they are producing some amazing wines at great value. The wines of Salvatore Geraci at Palari show tremendous depth and nuance.



PHOTOS/JOANN VITELLI

I have just started to really appreciate their depth and working with them on some of our tasting menus. Frank Cornelissen is also producing some really interesting wines from the base of the active volcano on Mount Etna. These wines have been around, but I was never exposed to them and they are impressive.

Q: What food/wine pairings do you

enjoy? Chef Chris is starting to roll out fall flavors and we are able to use more full-body wines. He just did a butter-squash risotto with lobster mushrooms. There is a touch of sweetness that balances out the richness of the risotto. We chose an off dry chenin blanc from the Loire Valley with a little age, 1999 Foreau Vouvray, and it was a beautiful pairing. The sweetness



CALEB HOPKINS

Age: 32 • **Born in:** Macon, Ga.

Lives in: Buckhead

Education: Bachelor of arts degree, hotel restaurant management, minor in business management, Georgia Southern University

Current job: Assistant general manager/ beverage director, Atlas

Previous jobs: Food and beverage director, Druid Hills Golf Club; sommelier/ manager, Merriman's Kapalua Maui; beverage director/sommelier, Westin Kanaa'napali Maui; manager, Bistro Niko; manager, Blue Pointe; manager, Nava; manager, Buckhead Diner; manager, Dos Primos

Family: Two sisters, one brother

Hobbies: Volleyball, Piedmont Park, surfing

canceled each other out and you were just left with this really nuanced golden apples with dates with a touch of butter. Chef Chris made an amazing foie gras with this citrus-driven mango chutney. The classic pairing is Sauternes and we have Château L'Ermitage, which is much lighter and has beautiful fruit. It cut right through the richness of the foie, but was bright and refreshing on the finish. Each sip made you yearn for another bite.

Q: What trends are you seeing in dining and beverages in Atlanta? Atlanta is currently involved in a massive revolution. Instead of just going with the California cabernet with the highest score and a steak, our guests care about where both their food and wine come from and how they are made. They are interested in producers that are striving to create a clean and balanced wine and food prepared with subtlety and care. It's a really exciting time to be a wine professional.

Q: Do you remember your first glass of wine? My first glass of wine was from a jug I snuck from my parent's fridge after they went to bed. I watched an episode of "Frasier" and felt so sophisticated. Sorry Mom.

Q: You've traveled to many great wine regions around the world. Where would you like to travel next that you haven't been and why? I have yet to make over to Niederösterreich in Austria. It's a beautiful country with delightful people and amazing wine. The crisp bright whites and lighter elegant reds are a delight.

TOP 5 WINE/BEVERAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Graf von Schönborn-Schloss Schonborn Erbacher Marcobrunn Riesling Kabinett, Rheingau, Germany 1997, \$90
- ▶ Raventos I Blanc L'Hereu Reserva Brut Cava, Penedes, Spain 2011, \$70
- ▶ Daniel Bouland Morgon Delys, Beaujolais, France 2012, \$68
- ▶ Château Ducru-Beaucaillou, Saint-Julien, France 1986, \$827
- ▶ Château l'Ermitage, Sauternes, Bordeaux, France 2010, \$60