



HEROES' GREAT TEST SIDEKICK

WHILE GUIDING APPRIO INC. FROM A FLEDGLING FIRM INTO A ROBUST COMPANY WITH OVER 200 EMPLOYEES, NATIONWIDE OFFICES AND \$30 MILLION IN REVENUE, **DARRYL BRITT, MSIA '90**, HELPED TRANSFORM HOW THE NATION RESPONDS TO DISASTERS — AND SAVED COUNTLESS LIVES.

It's everyone's worst nightmare: A hurricane or earthquake strikes, leveling homes, filling hospitals and decimating infrastructure. In the ensuing 24 hours, as emergency responders erect triage tents and FEMA clears roads, the software-based solutions developed by Apprio Inc. go to work.

Apprio's emergency response and homeland security solutions use technology to streamline how the nation responds to disasters. When search and rescue teams pull victims from the rubble and input their status into tablet computers, they type it into software Apprio developed. When they send that information to medical tents, they send it across closed networks established by Apprio. Even the doctors and nurses who utilize that information in the field are there because Apprio's technology helped deploy them.

"Our work lives at the intersection of health care and emergency response," Apprio president and founder Darryl Britt said.

Even after five straight years on both the Deloitte's Technology Fast 500 list and the Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing private companies — not to mention three consecutive years of employee and revenue growth, which earned Britt a Washington Smart CEO Future 50 Award in 2016 — Britt believes Apprio's best days lay ahead.

A WINDING PATH HOME

When Britt was a teenager, his father left a comfortable career at Getty Oil to found his own business. When Britt graduated as a math major from Carnegie Mellon University a few years later, his future was similarly uncertain. "I had no clue what I was doing," Britt remembers.

He pursued a master's degree at the Heinz School of Public Policy and Management for one year before leaving to work full time installing computers for the Fairfax County government in Virginia.

He loved the job, but when he was passed over for a promotion — "You were on a path when you got here; you need to go and finish that path," his director explained — Britt returned to Carnegie Mellon and enrolled in the Graduate School of Industrial Administration. "I was six years from undergrad, but now I was going back not because I didn't want to work — but because I knew what I wanted to work in," Britt said.

"The GSIA education was phenomenal," Britt said. "They put students through such rigorous training that when you go into the work world, you quickly find out that relative to a lot of your peers, you're just going to put in more work. When you become a manager in corporate America, there will always be more to do than you can get done. It's about prioritizing what's important to move your organization forward, and picking your battles."

His late nights at the business school soon turned into late nights at Deloitte. Using the analytic and computer skills he honed in school, Britt developed software-based solutions to reprocess insurance claims and fix payment problems for health care clients.

After four years at Deloitte, followed by another four working in a similar capacity at CDS Technologies, Britt struck out his own, just as his father had when he was a teenager. "I wanted to build a better mousetrap," Britt remembered.

Britt's new venture — named Allegis — launched overnight: "I sold the first contract before I even incorporated the company," Britt said. On a Thursday in 1998, Britt sold a contract to install Oracle-based financial systems for a subsidiary of Sprint's international venture, Global One. By Friday, Allegis was executing the install.

His new company grew quickly, and over the next three years, Britt and his team traveled to more than 22 countries installing Oracle systems. As his business expanded, Britt knew his company needed a name that more accurately reflected what they did. The result was Apprio: "app," to reflect his company's focus on software applications, and "Rio," as in "Rio De Janeiro," to speak to its global reach.

Despite its extensive international work, Apprio remained lean until a friend of Britt's, who had just sold Oracle software to a new department at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suggested Britt's company handle the installation.

The department, which stockpiled medication in preparation for a major disaster like a nuclear bomb or an

anthrax attack, became the first of many government clients for Apprio. "The intersection of health care and emergency response has been Apprio's focus to this day," Britt said.

APPRIO TODAY

Apprio's revenue in 2016 topped \$30 million, driven in part by its two largest clients: the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Its work with FEMA dates back to 2004, when four hurricanes made landfall in Florida in the span of just six weeks. Apprio helped manage FEMA's temporary base of operations in Orlando, where emergency responders checked in before deploying across the state. Today, Apprio's technology helps run FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness in Alabama, where the nation's emergency responders train.

For the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), a division of HHS, Apprio built and maintains the federal government's Electronic Health Records system, which has been deployed in major disasters over the past decade, including Hurricane Katrina and the Haiti earthquake.

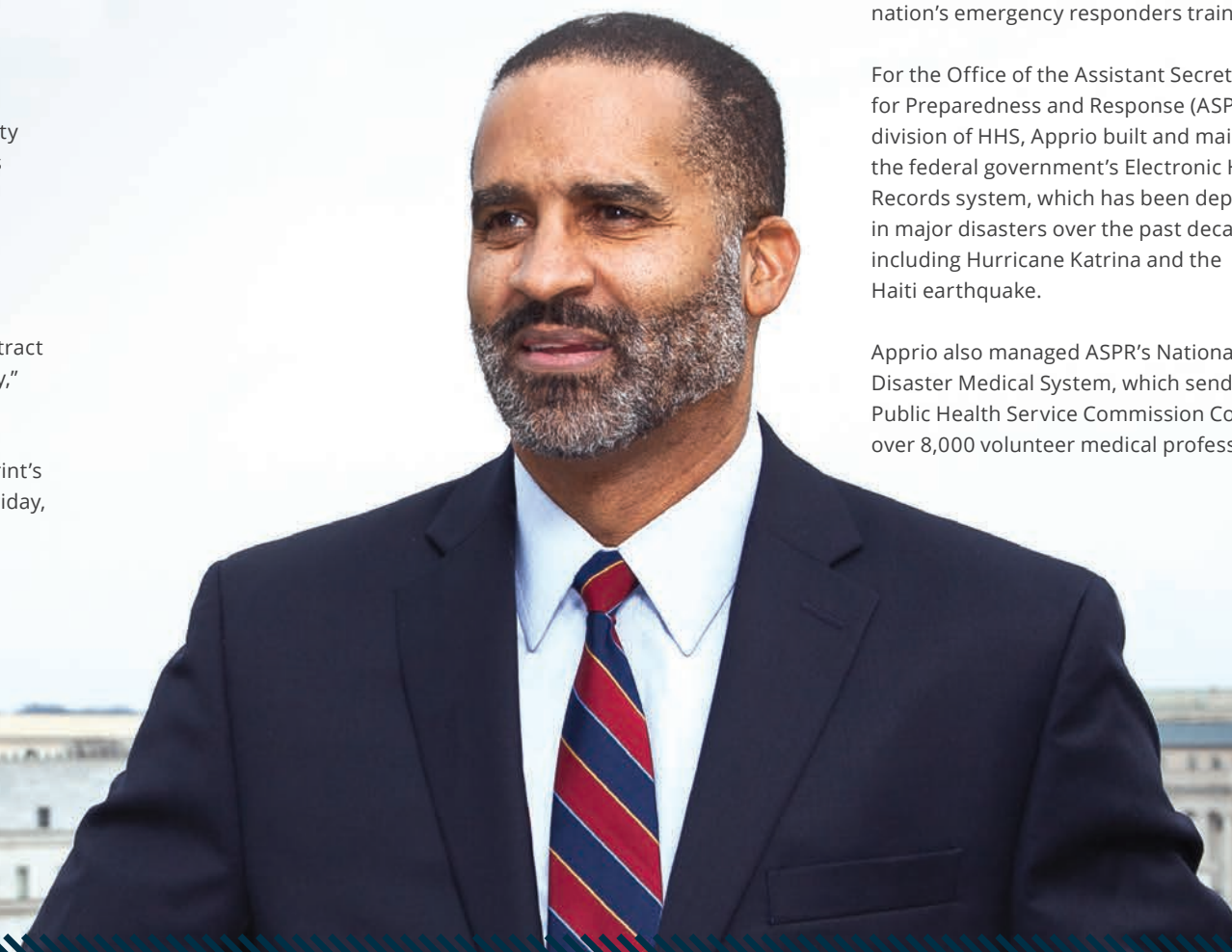
Apprio also managed ASPR's National Disaster Medical System, which sends in the Public Health Service Commission Corps — over 8,000 volunteer medical professionals

deployed after disaster strikes. Essentially the reserves for domestic medical staff, they "jump in their trucks with their sutures and needles to augment the local health care systems. A lot of people leave; somebody has to be there to run the hospitals," Britt said. Apprio's software enabled ASPR to rapidly verify medical responders' licenses and qualifications, a process known as credentialing.

The system's efficiency is crucial; when lives are at stake, every second counts.

Given that FEMA's and ASPR's budgets collectively total over \$14 billion, Apprio isn't the only game in town. What sets it apart is that it's both a management and a technology firm, Britt said. "You will find some companies just focused on either the technology or the management, but not both."

◀ "MY DAD HAD LEFT THE COMFORT OF WORKING FOR GETTY OIL AND STARTED HIS OWN BUSINESS WHEN I WAS 13 OR 14. THERE WAS NO FEAR OF JUMPING OFF THE CLIFF. I HAD IT IN MY BLOOD."



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Darryl Britt, MSIA '90 president and founder, Apprio Inc.



patients from the same hometown ended up thousands of miles away from each other. If they had experienced similar symptoms due to an identical strain of bacteria, for example, doctors could have considered their symptoms collectively and coordinated treatment. But because there was no centralized electronic database to track their movement or diagnoses upon leaving the medical tent, this wasn't possible. Apprio wants to change that.

It's a perfect example of how Apprio plans to harness the power of technology to save lives. Apprio's ability to innovate — coupled with the tragic reality that disasters are a matter of “when,” not “if” — gives Britt confidence in his company's future. “Our mission is essential operations,” Britt said. “Whether they're in health care or otherwise, they don't go away. In my humble opinion, we are looking at moderate but steady growth over the next five years.” —

“If your company just focuses on the technology, then as soon as it changes, it's going to cost your client a ton of money to adapt. The focus is the solution — not the technology. At Apprio, we're focused on solving business problems. That's what an Apprio professional brings to customers.”

But neither technology nor creative solutions could resolve an early limit on Apprio's growth. Britt's relentless work ethic, honed at the business school, helped grow Apprio into a formidable company, but it created a different problem: tunnel vision. “I was so hell-bent on being the best producer that I didn't have my head up looking at what was going on around me, valuing relationships and paying attention to the political environment,” Britt said. “Apprio really started growing when I started being cognizant of those things. From a purely entrepreneurial standpoint, there will come a time to stop working in the business, and start working on the business.”

THE PATH FORWARD

Britt compares Apprio's growth to a student's matriculation: “Our first 10 years,

we were in elementary school, learning the ropes. 2008 to 2012 were our middle school years; we were at 50 percent growth. The last five years, Apprio has tripled,” Britt said. “Now we go out and become adults.” How? Diversification.

“We are taking our core capabilities and expanding them to agencies that are similar to our missions,” Britt said. One growth opportunity Apprio is currently exploring is the military. “We support the government's civilian medical response, and the Department of Defense does the exact same thing. They use medical records in the field, and they do the same credentialing of doctors as we do on the domestic side.” But Britt and his team plan to do more than replicate successful past solutions. They're looking beyond the horizon, and they're particularly excited about the potential to use health information technology to track patient movement post-disaster.

In the days and weeks after Hurricane Katrina, for instance, thousands of victims were transferred to hospitals across the country to alleviate congestion. It's possible

◀ **“WE HAVE NEVER LOST A CLIENT. THAT SAYS A LOT ABOUT THE PEOPLE THAT WE HIRE. IF YOU ASK OUR CLIENTS, THEY'D SAY, 'YOUR PEOPLE ARE GREAT: HUMBLE, HARDWORKING, CREATIVE, AND THEY HAVE INTEGRITY.' THAT SEPARATES US FROM A LOT OF FOLKS.”**



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TEPPER

M A G A Z I N E

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Claudia Jury, BSIM '88

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Darryl Britt, MSIA '90

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Lillian MacEachern, MBA '09

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Steve Vicinanza, Ph.D. '90

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Matt Humphrey, MBA '08, E '07

VIEWPOINT: ON THE RISE

Leanne Meyer, director of
leadership development

REUNION RECAP 2017

