



December 1, 2016

Published by The 912 Group, Ltd.

Ronda Watson Barber—Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Volume 7—No. 22

Small Business is Good Business

Advocating, Informing and Promoting Small & Minority Owned Businesses



Wishing You The Best This Holiday Season

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OhioMBE welcomes letters to the editor from readers. Typed letters of 200 words or less are preferred; all might be edited. Each letter must include name, home address and daytime phone number. Some letter may appear on our website.

The 912 Group is an Ohio certified Minority Owned and EDGE business. The 912 Group is a certified FBE with the City of Columbus.

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government briefs

32nd Annual Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 12

The 32nd annual Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration will be held at noon Thursday, Jan. 12 at Trinity Episcopal Church, 125 E. Broad St., Columbus.

The Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission will present awards to Ohioans for their efforts to advance nonviolent social change.

Speakers will include youth who took first place in their respective age divisions of the 2016 Statewide MLK Oratorical Contest sponsored by the Ohio MLK Holiday Commission.

The event is free and open to the public. For additional information, visit: www.das.ohio.gov/mlk.

Columbus Councilmember Hardin sets to change Affirmative Action Policy



**Councilmember
Shannon Hardin**

On November 28th, Councilmember Shannon Hardin convened the Small and Minority Business Committee for a hearing on changes to Title 39 of the Columbus City Code. Title 39 governs the City's affirmative action policy.

- Changes the name of the "Equal Business Opportunity Commission Office" (EBOCO) to the "Office of Diversity and Inclusion" (ODI).
- Gives ODI authority to establish guidelines, initiatives, and programs to advance supplier and workforce diversity within City of Columbus departments, including Police and Fire.
- Finally, the new Code sets the framework to implement future unified goals based on the results of the 2017 disparity study.

Columbus City Schools misses LEDE purchasing goals for 4th straight year

The State's largest public school district, Columbus City Schools, has missed its goal to contract 20 percent of goods and services with local disadvantaged businesses for the fourth straight year. During the last school year, 108 LEDE certified (Local Economic Disadvantage Enterprises) businesses received contracts with Columbus City Schools, resulting in a spend of \$13.3 million dollars. The district spent 10.382% of purchasing dollars with LEDE businesses. Fifty businesses that received contracts under the LEDE program were Black. The overall purchasing dollars spend for fiscal year 2015-2016 was \$128 million dollars.

2014-2015 School Year

- 59 LEDE businesses received contracts; \$5.4 million was spent with LEDE businesses; 29 Black LEDE businesses received \$4.4 million in contracts; District spent \$60.4 overall in good & services; LEDE businesses received 8.9% of contracts.

Purchasing Goals are important in government contracting

By Ronda Watson Barber
OhioMBE Publisher

Why can't the state's largest public school district, Columbus City Schools, meet its purchasing goals with the city's disadvantaged businesses?

Are there biases, both implicit and overt, that are playing a role in the district not meeting its 20 percent purchasing goal with certified disadvantaged businesses? Are there barriers that are being placed before DBE's that are not allowing them to compete for contracts? Does the district want to do business with DBEs?

Voters recently gave the district a signal of confidence and support when they approved a recent permanent school tax. Are DBEs getting the same commitment from the school district?

Over 74 percent of the students who are enrolled in Columbus City Schools are students of color. Eighty percent of students live in poverty. It is important that these students see Black-

See Publisher on page 4

CCS from page 2

2013-2014 School Year

67 LEDE businesses received contracts; \$5.7 million was spent with LEDE Businesses; 35 Black LEDE businesses received \$4.2 million in contracts; District spent \$84.8 million overall in goods & services; LEDE businesses received 6.7 % of contracts

2012-2013 School Year

- 64 LEDE businesses received contracts; \$5.3 million was spent with LEDE businesses; 27 Black LEDE businesses received \$4.1 million in contracts; District spent \$83 million in goods & services; LEDE businesses received 6.4% of contracts; LEDE businesses received \$14 million under the Facilities Master Plan. These are the dollars used to for construction of news or rebuild and/or renovate schools.; The total FMP spend was \$49 million

At press time, Columbus City Schools did not respond to a request for a statement on the continued failure to meet the required 20 percent purchasing goal with LEDE certified businesses.



Scaffold Caddy selected as a semi-finalist for the BWC Safety Innovation Award



The Scaffold Caddy has been selected as a semi-finalist for the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation 2017 Safety Innovation Awards competition.

Designed by 2015 OhioMBE Top FBE Cathy Holloway and James Henderson, the Scaffold Caddy was created to alleviate the need for construction workers to transport conventional scaffold through a man door or on an elevator. It can also be utilized as a self-containment system, storing scaffolding when not in use. The Scaffold Caddy helps eliminate workforce injuries.

The Ohio Bureau of Workmen's Compensation performed an ergonomics study, and the results were astounding. The risk of CTD injury was decreased by 28% while production was increased by an amazing 88%. A task that previously took 70 minutes to complete can now be performed in only eight.

The finalists will be named in late December.

More information on the Scaffold Caddy can be found at www.ScaffoldCaddy.biz

Merry Christmas

Phoebe Lee selected to participate in Emerging Young Entrepreneur Program



Phoebe Lee has been selected as one of 13 Millennial CEO's to participate in the Emerging Young Entrepreneur (EYE) Program sponsored by the National Minority Suppliers Development Council (NMSDC).

Administered by LaSonya Berry, CEO of McPherson/Berry, the program is a year-long commitment that takes the Millennial CEO's through an

intensive curriculum that will develop/tune their leadership skills, maximize business opportunities, and connect them with corporate members nationally.

President of VDP Safety & Uniforms (VDP), Lee is a 2006 magna cum laude graduate of Clark Atlanta University. She continued her studies as a fashion designer at Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) in Atlanta and the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in NYC. Phoebe also embarked upon a successful modeling career appearing on Good Morning America, The Today Show, NY Live, VH1, among other networks. She has been featured in several magazines including InStyle Magazine.

Transferring her love for fashion into her dream business, VDP is a provider of safety supplies/equipment and uniform apparel.

Under her leadership, VDP has acquired an impressive client portfolio including Republic Parking, LAZ Parking, Ohio EPA, The Cleveland Job Corp, Franklin County Engineers/ Affinity Apparel, Jacobsen Daniels, RMD Holdings, and Gilbane Building Company, among others.

After a 13 year hiatus, Lee, the daughter of entrepreneurial parents, returned to Cleveland to assume a role that she had been groomed to pursue. "My parents cultivated a sense of entrepreneurship in my brother and me since infancy. I sold my friends candy in elementary school. It was the only way of life that I knew. With VDP, I am doing what I enjoy; it's where my passions lies," said Lee.

owned and disadvantaged businesses providing goods and services to the school district. Disadvantaged businesses can be role models and future employers for these students and their parents. When DBEs are participating in contracting opportunities within the school district, the entire community reaps economic benefits.

Columbus City Schools says it is committed to fostering an environment to provide economic opportunities to local DBEs through its Local Economically Disadvantaged Enterprise program, LEDE. The LEDE program certifies businesses who (1) have its principal place of business within Franklin County or 50 percent of employees live in the district; (2) the 51 percent owner has a personal net worth of \$750,000 not counting their primary residence or ownership investment in the company.

I am a strong believer that entities that receive public tax dollars from a diverse group of citizens have a moral obligation to be inclusive in their purchasing. If tax dollars are accepted from all segments of society, all should be provided access to contracting opportunities.

I have met personally with administrators and department managers to discuss the matter and to emphasize the importance of utilizing LEDE and Black-owned businesses in the purchasing scheme. A recent meeting with the Board of Education President and Chief Operating Officer was cancelled.

Is the purchasing goal important? What is the elected school board members' position on the district continually not meeting the goal? What answers are they giving to their constituents? Is the Board using LEDE businesses for its activities? Is the mandate to meet the goal coming from the top? After 30 years, the State of Ohio finally began to meet and exceed its 15 percent MBE purchasing goal, when Governor John Kasich threw down the gauntlet and required department and agency heads to meet the goals or find other jobs.

When given the opportunity, I strongly believe that LEDE and Black-owned business can compete and excel. This fact has been proven with the State's MBE program and Governor Kasich's commitment to the minority business community.

Just my thoughts...rwb

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When you need EDGE or MBE participants,
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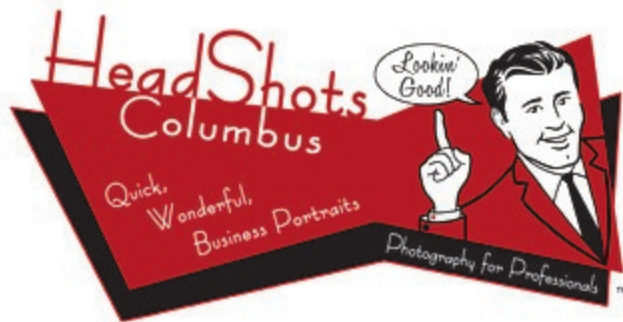
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Columbus:

- The Hub CDC
- Driving Park Library
- M & M Chicken
- Livingston Ave. Library
- Center For Urban Solutions
- M.L.K. Library
- Woodland Y.M.C.A.
- Woodland Christian Church
- Mayo's Printing-Bookstore
- Mt.Vernon AME Church
- A Cut Above The Rest Barber Shop
- Creole Kitchen
- Neighborhood House
- OSU Black Extension

- Center
- Urban League
- King Arts Complex
- Shiloh Baptist Church
- 2nd Baptist Church
- Lincoln Café
- St. Stephen's Community Center
- Bethel AME Church
- Linden Library
- COWIC
- Columbus Board of Education
- Women's Business Center
- Increase CDC
- Mt. Hermon Baptist Church
- 35 E. Gay Street Lobby
- Corinthian Missionary Baptist Church
- Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
- Destiny Center
- Columbus Main Library

Newark

- Shiloh Baptist Church
- Trinity AME Church

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Small business isn't for the faint of heart. It's for the brave, the patient and the persistent. It's for the overcomer. – Unknown

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bid opportunities

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Columbus City Schools issues solicitations on a regular basis for goods & services related to food, construction, technology, curriculum, & transportation. Interested vendors should periodically check our website at <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/rfp>



AKRON METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Separate sealed bid proposals for each Bid Package listed below will be received by the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority at 100 West Cedar Street, Akron, Ohio 44307 until **2:00 P.M.**, local time, on **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016** at which time and place all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud for:

LAWNCARE MAINTENANCE SERVICES, LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS AND RELATED WORK at VARIOUS LIPH LOCATIONS WITHIN SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO

Bid Package #1 – Pinewood Gardens

Bid Package #2 – James E. Alpeter, Allen Dickson, Wooster Storage, Van Buren Homes, Crimson Terrace, Harding Road Apartments

Bid Package #3 – Vacant Scattered Site Houses and Reasonable Accommodations (RA) Units

Bidders may bid on as many or as few of the bid packages as desired. Separate contracts will be awarded for each bid

package.

Specifications can be purchased at SE Blueprint, Inc. located at 540 South Main Street, Suite 211, Akron, Ohio 44311 (330) 376-1689. seblue@seblueprint.com

The above mentioned are on file for viewing at the Subcontractors Association NEO, 637 Vernon Odom Blvd., Akron, Ohio; Akron Urban League, Minority Business Assistance Center, 440 Vernon Odom Blvd., Akron, Ohio; the Builders Exchange of Canton, 5080 Aultman Rd., North Canton, Ohio; Builders Exchange of Cleveland, 9555 Rockside Road, Suite 300, Cleveland, Ohio; and the Ohio Construction News, 7261 Engle Road, Suite 304, Cleveland, Ohio. A list of plan holders can be obtained from SE Blueprint's website

@ www.seblueprint.com

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held by the Housing Authority at the AMHA Administration Building, 100 West Cedar Street, Akron, Ohio 44307, on **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2016 at 2:00 P.M.**

See full bid notice at www.Ohiombe.com/bid-opportunities



Walsh Construction encourages bids from all qualified subcontractors/suppliers including MBE/WBE/SBE, firms for the – **NEORS SECOND STAGE LIFT STATION (PROJECT NO. EB-23727)** until 11:00 AM EST, on December 21, 2016.

In general, the work shall consist of furnishing all labor, materials, equipment, and incidentals for construction of the following work:

- Substation 4 System
 - o Electrical upgrades.
- Second Stage Lift Station
 - o Upgrade of firm capacity of Second Stage Lift Station from 450 MGD to 480 MGD. Work consists of upgrading each of the three variable speed pumps from 90 MGD to 105 MGD capacity and providing larger motors.
 - o Construction of new Electrical Building for Second Stage Lift Station.
 - o Installation of 5kV Switchgear.
 - o Upgrade variable speed liquid rheostat to variable speed drives.
 - o Upgrade exterior architecture.
 - o Structural repair of concrete on the exterior walls of the inlet and effluent wet wells.
 - o Upgrades to HVAC and plumbing.

o Elevator code upgrades.

- Waste Liquor and Gravity Thickener Overflow: Perform piping modifications and valve installations
- Ferric Chloride: Install ferric chloride trimming system, including tank, piping, and diffuser.
- In general, Work consists of civil, architectural, structural, mechanical, HVAC, plumbing, instrumentation, and electrical improvements.

A pre-bid conference has been set for 10:30 AM local time on Thursday, December 1, 2016 at the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center, Renewable Energy Facility, 6000 Canal Road, Cuyahoga Heights, Ohio 44125.

The project is located in Cleveland in the vicinity of River Road and Elm Avenue.

Work scopes include: demo, concrete, cast in place, masonry, misc. metal, rough carpentry, roofing, FRP doors and frames, glazing, finishes, painting, conveying equipment, plumbing, HVAC, electrical, earthwork, utilities.

If you have any questions regarding this project please contact Joe Grant at 313-456-6534 or jgrant@walshgroup.com

Walsh is an Equal Opportunity Employer, Minority/Female/Disabled/Veteran.

22 Holiday Marketing Ideas for Local Businesses

Small Business Saturday is over, but it's not the only opportunity for local small businesses to capture customers' dollars this holiday season. Whether you're a retailer, restaurateur or own a service business such as a hair salon, there are plenty of opportunities to market your biz for holidays. Here are 22 ideas to get you started.

1. **Check in with last year's customers.** Who bought from your business during the 2015 holiday shopping season? Reach out to them with email marketing messages, special offers or direct mail pieces. This is a great tactic for service businesses who sell services needed annually, such as carpet cleaning or HVAC servicing.
2. **Partner with other businesses near you to host a holiday shopping event,** such as a sidewalk sale. Restaurants can sell small portions of their menu items to attract even more traffic.
3. **Hold a contest or raffle.** This is a great way to get customers involved with your business and increase foot traffic.
4. **Team up with another local business** and offer discounts for people who have a receipt from your partner store (and vice versa). You can make it a complementary business (such as a toy store and a children's clothing boutique) or just base the partnership on proximity (such as a restaurant next to a movie theater).
5. **Add entertainment to your store.** Take it one step beyond holiday decor and music by actually hosting musicians, storytellers, face painters or magicians—whatever makes sense for your business. Promote the performance online and with outside signage to attract passersby.
6. **Display art from local artists on your walls** (and let customers buy it). You can change the offerings every few weeks to keep it fresh. Have an art opening with invitations and refreshments whenever you add a new artist.
7. **Create a photo op.** Get creative with holiday photos with Santa. They're not just for kids: Set up a time for pets to have their photos taken too. Don't have room for Santa photos in your location? Team up with other local businesses and your Chamber of Commerce and find a space nearby that can host Santa (and drive traffic to your businesses in the process). For example, on one retail shopping street near me, Santa greets children in front of a local bank every year.
8. **Teach your customers how to do something holiday-related.** Holiday crafts, a gift wrap clinic, or lessons in cooking a special holiday dish are all ideas for holiday how-tos.
9. **Hold special holiday hours.** Your customers have busy lives, and you're competing with e-commerce businesses that are open 24/7. Expand your hours if possible to accommodate as many customers as you can. Be sure to promote the extended holiday hours on your website.

Holiday Tips on page 11

business resources



Women's Business Centers of Ohio
www.wbcoho.org



www.EmployOhio.com



Ohio Business Development Center
www.OHBDC.org

Ohio Certification Center

The Ohio Certification Center is here to help you get your business certified as a:

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Looking to hire an intern? Columbus Downtown High School's Business Students are looking for opportunities to gain practical, challenging and meaningful on-the-job work experience.

Your interest and the availability of openings determine the possibilities. From the start, interns are challenged to demonstrate their strengths and apply their knowledge to help you achieve your business goals. Students welcome paid and unpaid Internships as the main focus is the "authentic" experience.

Areas of opportunities can include Accounting, Communications, Engineering, Environmental Health & Safety, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Logistics, Manufacturing, Marketing, and Purchasing sectors.

Students are available beginning January until May within the hours of 12:00 pm -2:00 pm.

Please contact Cheryl Cooper for more information at 614-365-2283.

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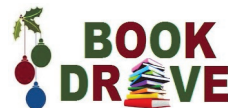
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Local groups collecting new books for Holiday Season

The Mount Vernon Plaza Holiday Party is fostering



community and family by collaborating with the Ohio State University African American and African Studies Community Extension Center to collect new books for neighborhood families. New books for readers aged birth to young adult will be accepted at the AAASC, 905 Mt. Vernon Avenue – Columbus through December 14.

Please contact AAAS CEC at 614-292-3922 or aaascec@osu.edu with questions.

Ohio Diversity Network

Holiday Tips from page 9

Get a weekly email from
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upcoming events.

Sign up online!

Hosting a business event?
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www.OhioDiversityNetwork.com

Email: news@ohiombe.com for
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Thursday, December 8,
2016 at 10:00am
Senior Living Truth Series
– The Truth on Elder Law

Thursday, December 15,
2016 at 6:00pm
J Pearson Scholars: Ne-
groes with Guns: Rob Wil-
liams & Black Power

Monday, January 16,
2017 at 7:00am
32 Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Breakfast

www.OhioDiversityNetwork.com



Ohio Faith News



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hosting an event?

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10. **Get social.** In addition to promoting all your sales and events on social media, you can also share useful tips related to your business. For example, a retailer could share various gift guides (such as gifts for teachers, grandparents, boyfriends). A catering company could share ideas for party planning and decor. A carpet cleaning business could suggest ways for making a house guest-ready (including, of course, cleaning the carpets).

See the remainder of the list on our website at
www.OhioMBE.com or Facebook page.

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Join The Women's Business Center & OhioMBE for a Holiday Networking Event

When: Wednesday, December 14

Where: Women's Business Center, 1655 Old Leonard Avenue -
Columbus

Time: 4 to 6 pm

Food | Silent Auction to benefit WBC & Frank W. Watson Scholarship | Raffles | FUN



We need silent auction and raffles items for the Dec. 14 Holiday Event. Email rbarber@ohiombe.com to make a tax-deductible donation.

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