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Ronda Watson Barber—Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Volume 9—No. 15

Advocating, Informing and Promoting Small & Minority Owned Businesses



Celebrating 9 Years of Publishing

Rob Richardson's visionary mission to fight for our democracy and transform the Ohio Treasurer's Office

If we don't get out and vote this November to save our democracy from the enormous harm being done to it, it might be too late, Democratic Ohio Treasurer candidate Rob Richardson said in an interview last week.



"Things are bad now, but if we don't have a balance brought back to our government in this election, things will absolutely get worse," he warned. "We will legitimize all the things that have happened and they will become acceptable."

Those in power in the Republican Party will feel empowered to do more, to go further, and the

See Richardson on page 5

"My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total. I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution" - U.S. Rep. Barbara Jordan

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Ohio meets 15 percent minority business state purchasing goal for fourth year

For the fourth consecutive year, the State of Ohio has exceeded the goal of its Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program. During Fiscal Year 2018, the state purchased 21.63 percent of eligible goods and services through certified minority-owned businesses, while spending more than \$268 million.

Ohio's MBE program, established in 1980, mandates that state agencies set aside 15 percent of annual purchases for goods and services from certified minority-owned businesses. Governor John Kasich has made achieving the 15 percent mandate a priority during his administration. Since 2011, the state has made steady progress in identifying set-aside opportunities, certifying minority-owned businesses and matching them with state contract opportunities, reaching the 15 percent set-aside goal for the first time in 2015.

"We are pleased to report that Ohio has met its 15 percent set-aside goal for the fourth consecutive year. Governor Kasich challenged us to make reaching this goal the norm and we have

See Ohio on page 6



Ohio Democratic Party creates Minority Engagement Program

There is a conversation happening right now about whether the Democratic Party provides enough support and outreach to the African-American community, even as it is readily apparent that our community — particularly black women — are the most loyal voting bloc in the party.

Year after year, we've seen black women organizing in the neighborhoods, turning out their friends and family to vote.

But that loyalty and dedication is not always rewarded.

The Ohio Democratic Party is working to change that, and they've created a Minority Engagement Program — led by Ron McGuire, the longtime district director for Congresswoman Joyce Beatty, and staffed by local consultants who come from the community — to ensure the Democratic Party is reaching out, and more importantly, listening to African-American voters.

"We started our work in the spring, holding roundtables to learn about what was working — and what isn't working — in minority communities across the state," said McGuire. "Sometimes there were some tough things we needed to hear, but that's what this was all about. Then we took what we heard and what we learned, and we turned that into an action plan, not just for 2018, but for 2019 and beyond, too. That's because we can't just keep showing up during an election year and asking for someone's vote; we have to build and rebuild relationships, and we need to be present 365 days a year, whether there's an election coming up or not."

The minority engagement team is connecting with local faith leaders, organizing events in small

See Democrats on page 10

Nominate a business for an OhioMBE Award

The 2018 OhioMBE Awards are accepting nominations for Top MBE, Top FBE and Top Family Business from Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Dayton and Akron/Canton.

The OhioMBE Awards will recognize the state's top small businesses and their advocates during a scholarship luncheon on Thursday, October 25 at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium Africa Event Center. The preeminent business networking event is attended by small business owners, bankers, elected officials, construction companies, corporations, government representatives and others.

A portion of proceeds benefits the Frank W. Watson Scholarship. The renewable scholarship is presented to students who are pursuing post-secondary education or training opportunities. One scholarship is earmarked for a Columbus East High school student-athlete. To date, there are six Frank W. Wat-

See Award on page 9

Council Hosts "Courthouse to the Community" Events

Councilmembers Jaiza Page, Michael Stinziano, and the City's Department of Neighborhoods, are hosting "Courthouse to the Community" resource fairs throughout Columbus.

These events aim to connect residents with local court services.

"Council is always looking for ways to engage with residents out in the community," said Page. "This is another opportunity for us to help provide vital resources and information."

Events will be held at the following locations:

- Thursday, September 6, 5:30-7pm, The King Arts Complex, 867 Mt. Vernon Ave.
- Thursday, September 13, 5:30-7pm, Glenwood Community Recreation Center, 1888 Fairmont Ave.
- Tuesday, October 2, 5:30-7pm, Gillie

See Council on page 6

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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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Questions to ask those seeking elected office

By Ronda Watson Barber
Publisher

It's that time of the year again. Those seeking elected office will be asking for your vote. Below are some questions to ask them. Our votes and dollars are precious. We must use them wisely to empower, grow and economic development our communities. The upcoming midterm elections could possibly be the biggest election of our lifetime. There is a time to take a stand and stand for what is right. That time is now. It's time to bring truth, justice and civility back into our government. It's time to finally make the statement that diversity and inclusion are the norms.

The U.S. Constitution applies to all of us. We all have the responsibility to work to insure a more perfect union for future generations. Obstacles will be placed before us to register to vote and on Election Day. We must resist and persist!

Just my thoughts--RWB

Questions to ask candidates seeking public office

As small and minority business owners consider asking the following questions to those seeking public office and your vote.

1. What have you done for Black-owned & minority businesses during your career?
2. What do you promise to do for Black-owned & minority businesses if elected?
3. What Black-owned & minority business do you regularly purchase products or services from?
4. Why should Black-owned & minority business owners vote for you?
5. How important is Black-owned & minority business development to the overall Ohio economy?
6. Are minority business set-asides and goals in city/county/state government still important and why?
7. What can the city/county/state do to improve its purchas-

See Publisher on page 9

Letters to the editor are welcome and will be considered for publication or posting online. The preferred method is to text within an email. Please include contact information including letter writer's city and state. The letter must be fewer than 300 words. No more than four signatures per letter. We edit and/or trim letters as little as possible, but we reserve the right to do so as necessary. Send to news@ohiombe.com

We need a big bold plan

by Michele Reynolds



With 54,000 people in Central Ohio paying more than half of their income for housing and a real estate market where rent and sale prices continue to rise, there is

a dearth of Affordable Housing in Franklin County causing many low and moderate income residents struggling to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table. We need a big bold plan for housing and job creation in Franklin County. It's time to get creative and start thinking outside of the box about how to resolve this affordable housing crisis before it gains more momentum. It's time to take a hard look at public policy and develop creative solutions for public and private partnerships.

Some Ohio cities are finding ways to leverage tools such as Social Impact Bonds, (Leveraging private investment to support high-impact social programs.) We also have the emergence of smart solutions such as Opportunity Zones, which are a part of the Tax bill in DeWine/ Husted's Ohio Plan for Prosperity, whereby economically distressed communities that are designated as Opportunity Zones will allow for investors or companies to invest their unrealized capital gains in communities and reward them if they invest for the long haul with no Capital gains taxes. This attracts private investment in Ohio and Franklin Counties most vulnerable neighborhoods where we desperately need affordable housing and job creation.

The public-private partnership leverages private investment and rewards job creators and housing developers to help tackle these social issues. We need this change. We need these innovative strategies and solutions that attract talent, entrepreneurship and promote prosperity. This problem requires all hands on deck, which leaves government, corporations, and landlords to ask themselves the question, "What must I do?" We need landlords and homeowners to open their doors, educational programs to teach their residents how to be good tenants, builders that are educated about cost-saving quality materials, and investors looking for opportunities to revitalize communities all the while making them more affordable.

See Guest on page 6

bid opportunities

To post a bid notice, call 614-522-9122 or email news@ohiombe.com



COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY. COMMITMENT. COLLABORATION.

The Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority is seeking Request for Proposal (RFP) for the procurement of Human Resources Training Consultant. The response deadline is

Monday September 17, 2018 at 11:00AM. A pre-proposal conference is scheduled for 2:00PM on Wednesday September 5, 2018 at our corporate office. Specifications may be obtained by visiting our website, www.cmhanet.com or by contacting the Purchasing Department of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority at 880 E. 11th Ave, Columbus, Ohio 43211 or by calling 614-421-4434, 8:00 AM-4:00 PM, Monday – Friday.



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>



The Columbus Regional Airport Authority values diversity and inclusion and the impact small and minority-owned firms

have on the Central Ohio economy. The Columbus Regional Airport Authority invites you to access the following link: <https://columbusairports.com/doing-business-with-us/solicitation-opportunities> to sign-up for RSS feeds to automatically receive notifications of new bid opportunities and results. Email BusinessDiversity@ColumbusAirports.com for questions about the Diversity Programs at Columbus Regional Airport Authority.

Get Bid Notices Delivered to your inbox

Visit www.OhioMBE.com and add your email address to our bid notice database.



#bidnotices

THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Development is looking for diverse vendors and contractors who are licensed with the City of Columbus working in the following areas:

- **Graffiti Removal.** Contact Eric Voorhees (614-645-7934 or eavorhees@columbus.gov).
- **Grass Cutting and Solid Waste Removal.** Contact Mike Schwab (614- 645-7122 or mfschwab@columbus.gov).
- **Demolition and Asbestos Abatement.** Contact Mike Farrenkopf (614- 679-5873 or mifarrenkopf@columbus.gov) or Seth Brehm (614-645-5659 or swhbrehm@columbus.gov).
- **Mowing, Property Maintenance, and Miscellaneous Services.** Contact Audrea Hickman (614-645-8907 or aehickman@columbus.gov)
- **Construction trades including: General Construction, Home Improvement, Electrical, HVAC, Plumbing, and Lead Abatement.** Contact Tim Tilton (614- 724-3009 or twilton@columbus.gov).
- **Lead Safe Columbus has funding to train contractors for the Lead Abatement and Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Program.** Contact Erica Hudson (614- 645-6739 or ejhudson@columbus.gov).

To register for notifications on upcoming bid opportunities, please visit <http://vendors.columbus.gov/sites/public>.

kokosing
INDUSTRIAL



“Attention Certified MBE/WBE Companies” Kokosing Industrial, Inc. is preparing bids for the

Waynesville Regional WWTP Improvements Project in Lebanon, Ohio which bids September 13, 2018. We are seeking quotes for any portion of the project listed that you are qualified to perform or provide supplies for which includes the following: Demolition, Rebar, Misc. Metals, Roofing, Doors, Painting/Coatings, Plumbing, HVAC, Electrical, I&C, and Erosion Control. Bidding documents can be examined online by emailing Sonja Nichols at snichols@kokosing.biz for the link. Please have your quote to Kyle Kuhlman by 12:00 PM September 12, 2018: e-mail ksk@kokosing.biz or Fax 614-212-5711.

“Kokosing Industrial is an equal opportunity employer.”
Page 4

only way to stop them is to put a check on their power by electing Democrats this November, Richardson said.

"We're going to have to be motivated. We're going to have to be inspired. And we're going to have to work as if our democracy and our rights depend on it because they really do," Richardson said.

Richardson said that in his lifetime he has never before seen overt hate mainstreamed like it has been.

"As I say often, there is no magical blue wave that is coming to save us," he said. "There are no responsible Republicans who are willing to stand up, or they would've done it a long time ago. We are going to have to work for our democracy or it may not be there."

This is on the ballot whether people realize it or not, he said.

Richardson said he sees the position of Ohio Treasurer differently than most.

"I look as the Treasurer's Office not just as something that focuses on numbers, but really something that can be used to empower people and create systemic reform," he said. "I'm going to use the power of this office -- the power of the purse - to hold the powerful accountable."

He said he would lead by divesting the state from bad actors who are causing harm, holding up the for-profit prison industry as an example.

Richardson said it's immoral to have a prison system that is based upon profit instead of keeping people safe and rehabilitating offenders. It's the reason why Ohio has the fourth largest prison population in the United States and have more people in prison than New York, he said.

Richardson would conduct a fiscal impact analysis on the criminal justice system and analyze best practices from other states to help decrease the number of those incarcerated while still keeping the community safe.

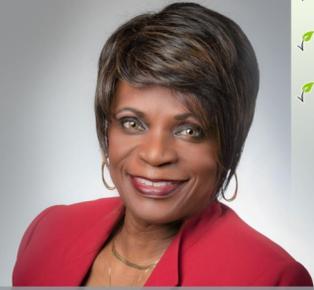
"That's been done in other states. We can learn from that and save taxpayer dollars where we can while providing opportunities for people," he said.

Beyond that, Richardson said he would like to invest in economic development, more low-interest student loans and refinancing for those already in debt as Ohio is one of the leading states in the nation for student debt.

This is especially important right now as the Trump Admin-

See Richardson on page 7

Dr. Linda J. Burrs



- Are you where you want to be in your career or profession right now?
- Does your organization need training to understand & overcome unconscious bias?
- Do you want a way to better manage team conflict?
- Do you struggle with communication in your team?

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succeeded in doing so,” said Pamela Osborne, state equal employment opportunity coordinator and interim deputy director of the Equal Opportunity Division of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, which certifies businesses into the MBE program.

“Continuing to provide the resources to minority business owners allows them to grow their businesses, create jobs and participate in a strong and vibrant Ohio economy,” said Jeffrey L. Johnson, chief of the Minority Business Development Division at the Ohio Development Services Agency.

Out of the eligible expenditures for goods and services purchased during Fiscal Year 2018, 18.86 percent was set aside for MBE-certified businesses. Another 2.78 percent of eligible goods and services were purchased from MBE-certified businesses through open-market contracts.

Ohio’s Equal Opportunity Division oversees the MBE program and helps to ensure equal opportunity access to and fair treatment in government contracting. It strives to maximize contracting opportunities through certification of minority-owned, women-owned, veteran-owned and socially and economically disadvantaged businesses.

Community Center, 2100 Morse Rd.

“These events highlight wonderful services that are readily available to residents to help them meet their needs,” said Stinziano. “The local courts, along with a number of providers, contribute to the health and safety of our neighborhoods, and Council is committed to our continual investment in them.”

Representatives from the City, County and non-profit organizations include but are not limited to:

- Columbus City Attorney’s Office, including the Domestic Violence Unit
- Franklin County Court of Common Pleas
- Franklin County Municipal Court
- Franklin County Municipal Clerk of Courts
- Franklin County Municipal Court Landlord-Tenant Services
- Franklin County Environmental Court
- Franklin County Justice Expo and Health and Wellness Fair
- Franklin County Juvenile and Domestic Court
- Franklin County Public Defender Office
- Franklin County Probation Department
- Franklin County Self Help Resource Center
- Franklin County Small Claims Division
- Mediation Clinic and Research
- Community Mediation Services
- The Legal Aid Society of Columbus

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Guest from page 3

My life’s work has been in the area of housing and creating solutions that help marginalized people afford a place to call home. Central Ohio is behind the 8-ball on this issue, but I plan to bring my expertise to the table and work collectively with other key stakeholders to ensure that the right economic tools are in place to create affordable housing that is within reach for every resident of Franklin County.

Creating affordable housing solutions is a win for all. Every resident of Central Ohio has a part to play from education to investment that will result in success and wealth for all.

Michele Reynolds is President and CEO of NISRE Inc. She is a current Candidate for Franklin County Commissioner.

**[www.ohiombe.com/
bid-opportunities](http://www.ohiombe.com/bid-opportunities)**




*“The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” -
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

#bizevents

**GOT
YOUR
TICKET?**

**Tickets are going fast for the Sept. 27
OhioMBE Procurement Fair, hosted by the
Kokosing Industrial**

**Meet one-on-one to promote your
product/service**

The following organizations are attending:
Columbus City Schools, City of Columbus Dept. of De-
velopment, Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority
(CMHA); Kokosing Industrial, Kokosing Construction,
Ohio Secretary of State

Check our social media sites for updates

Register at www.OhioMBE.eventbee.com

Richardson from page 5

istration is currently removing protec-
tions for student borrowers and Re-
publicans in Ohio have failed to act on
their behalf.

"I want to make sure that we fight to
expand access and opportunities for
others. It's been my passion. It's why
I've done everything I've done and it's
why I'm running for this position right
now," he said.

Richardson has a history of facing ob-
stacles and overcoming them. It moti-
vates everything he does, he said. He
was in learning disability classes from
the second to the eighth grade and
struggled in school, but was fortunate
to have a strong support system with
two strong parents who didn't allow
him to accept limitations, he said.

"When I talked to my teachers and my
counselors, and told them I wanted to
start preparing for college, they told
me, 'It's never going to happen for
you. College is not meant for you be-
cause it's not meant for everybody,'"

Richardson shared. "Thankfully, I had
a much better talk and support from
my parents, in particularly my mother,
and hearing her words, they still reso-
nate with me to this day. She said,
'Look Rob, you don't have to be de-
fined by anybody's low or narrow ex-
pectations of you. You define yourself,
for yourself, by yourself.'"

Richardson went on to graduate from
the University of Cincinnati with a
bachelor's degree in engineering, and
then earned his law degree there be-
fore eventually being appointed to the
University of Cincinnati Board of Trus-
tees, and later its chairman.

Richardson said he wants voters to
keep in mind that they have the pow-
er to really make a difference in No-
vember. The majority of the people in
Ohio and across the country believe in
diversity and investing in the future,
he said, but we only get that if we
work for it.

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Ohio Diversity Network

Get a weekly email from OhioDiversityNetwork.com notifying you of upcoming events. Sign up online!

Thursday, September 6, 2018 at 10:00am
Ohio Business & Career Expo - Columbus

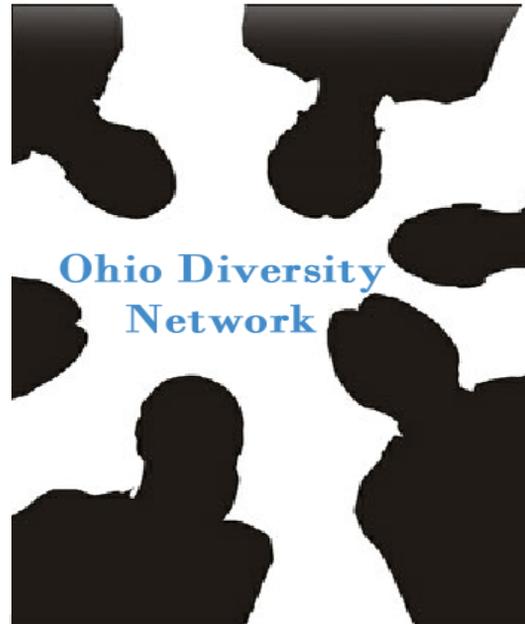
Monday, September 10, 2018 at 7:00pm
Columbus Branch NAACP – General Membership Meeting - Columbus

Saturday, September 15, 2018 at 2:01am
Certification 101 at the WBC - Columbus

Wednesday, September 19, 2018 at 11:30am
ECDI Capital for Construction Program Lunch and Learn Series: Cash Flow and Overhead Planning - Columbus

Thursday, September 27, 2018 at 1:00pm
OhioMBE Procurement Fair – hosted by Kokosing Industrial - Westerville

Friday, September 28, 2018 at 7:30am
COMTO Columbus Golf Outing - Powell



Save the Date

MBE Ohio 2018
Awards

October 25, 2018

Sponsored by:

Columbus Regional Airport Authority | The City of Columbus
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Ohio Business Development Center
The Columbus Zoo & Aquarium

Hosting a business event?

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for login information

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Program Begins 7:30am
Adjournment 10am

**Greater Columbus Convention Center
in Exhibit Hall C
400 North High St
Columbus OH 43215**



keynote speaker
JOHN B. KING, JR.
Former Secretary Of Education
Under President Barack Obama



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MLKBreakfast@yahoo.com | (614) 863-6442 | www.MLKjrBreakfast.com

Award from page 2

son Scholars.

The nomination form is online
at www.OhioMBEAwards.com

The deadline for submitting is Sept. 30.

Publisher from page 3

- ing with minority businesses?
8. What should minority owned businesses do to get city/county/state contracts?
 9. Is there anything else, aside from contracting that the city/county/state can do to assist MBE's?
 10. Who are the major contributors to your campaign?

Frank W. Watson
Scholarship 

OhioMBE Certification 101 at the WBC

Create new business opportunities. Get your business certified

There are several reasons why you should get your business certified:

1. Some entities have purchasing goals. Only certified businesses can participate.
2. Certification adds legitimacy to your business. You have gone through a process that has determined that your business is owned and controlled by a minority, woman or disadvantaged business.
3. Certification can afford you loan and bonding opportunities. The State of Ohio has loan and bonding programs specifically for certified minority owned businesses.
4. Certification can be a marketing tool for your business. You can add your certifications to your marketing materials, business cards, website, etc. Many consumers like doing business with veteran, minority or woman owned businesses.
5. Certification can be used in the private sector. Many companies don't have a certifying program but in an effort to have supplier diversity, will accept the certifications from some governmental agencies.



www.OhioMBE.eventbee.com

Next class: Sept. 15 at the Columbus WBC

Here are some SBA tips a good time to catch up on some marketing activities you've been putting on the back burner

Democrats from page 2

Your Customers

1. Schedule catch-up calls or lunch with your biggest clients to see how you can better serve them in the coming year.
2. Reach out to a former customer who's fallen off your radar and see if you can win their business again.
3. Check in with a prospect you've been nurturing to see if you can get them closer to a sale.
4. Gather client testimonials you can use in your marketing materials.
5. Ask your best customers for referrals.
6. Create some case studies to show how your product or service helps your customers.
7. Enlist some satisfied clients to feature in a marketing video for your business.
8. Collect before-and-after pictures from clients to show off your work, and get permission to use them in your marketing materials.
9. Make your lists for sending holiday gifts and cards to customers.

Your Website

Dig into your website analytics. Find out:

1. Where most of your website visitors are coming from.
2. Which web pages they spend the most time on.
3. Which pages generate the most leads.
4. Which pages have the highest bounce rate.
5. Use this information to fine-tune your online marketing, landing pages, and calls to action.
6. Go through your website to make sure all the information (phone numbers, FAQs, etc.) is current and accurate.
7. Check all links to make sure they work and are current.
8. Go through your listings on local search directories, such as Google My Business, to make sure they are current and that your name, address, and phone (NAP) information is consistent across all listings.

Your Email Marketing

1. Clean up your email list.
2. Brainstorm new ideas for adding names to your email list.
3. Segment your email list in two different types of customers.
4. Review your email analytics. What can you do differently to make your email marketing more effective?

Your Community

1. Get together with non-competing local business owners to share marketing ideas.
2. Team up with your local Chamber of Commerce, business association, or other local business organization to plan group promotions for the holiday season.

businesses like barbershops and beauty salons and reaching out to Black Greek organizations to educate and empower African-American voters.

"As African Americans, we've all seen what's been happening in this country since President Obama left office," said McGuire. "The most important thing is to let folks know that they have the power to do something about it. There is strength and power in numbers, but we only have that power if we organize and vote. And after that, we have to hold our elected officials accountable once they're in office."

McGuire emphasized that issues like health care and criminal justice reform are all on the ballot in 2018.

Republicans like Mike DeWine and Jim Renacci want to repeal Obamacare, take away protections for people with pre-existing conditions like asthma and diabetes and defund programs that help fight infant mortality. Meanwhile, Sen. Sherrod Brown and Rich Cordray would protect Obamacare, defend Medicaid expansion, which has provided health coverage to 700,000 Ohioans, and keep funding for Planned Parenthood.

This fall Ohio voters will decide whether to approve a constitutional amendment that would reform sentencing, divest from prisons and invest in communities. In addition to reclassifying minor drug possession offenses as misdemeanors, the ballot initiative would also end the probation-to-prison pipeline.

The Ohio Democratic Party's minority engagement team will be talking with voters about these issues and more from now through Election Day.

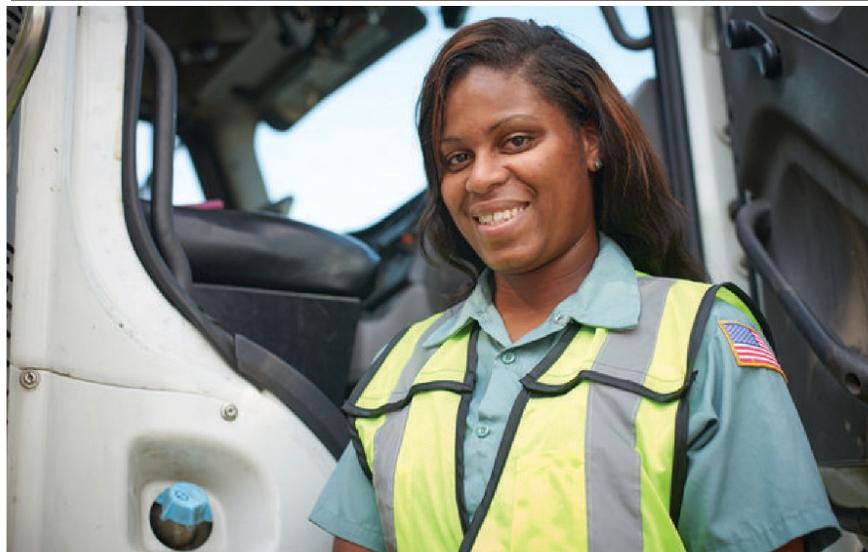
If you'd like to find out more, text TEAM to 909-75.

3. Attend a networking organization you haven't been to before.
4. Find a charitable organization for your business to support.
5. Look for a nonprofit community group that your business can get involved with.
6. Make a list of upcoming community events your business could sponsor or participate in.
7. Research tradeshows to attend in the coming year, either as an exhibitor or an attendee.



*Reserve your spot today at the
Sept. 27 OhioMBE
Procurement Fair hosted by
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Week	Date	Opponent
1	Sat. Sept. 1	Oregon State
2	Sat. Sept. 8	Rutgers
3	Sat. Sept. 15	at TCU
4	Sat. Sept. 22	Tulane
5	Sat. Sept. 29	at Penn State
6	Sat. Oct. 6	Indiana
7	Sat. Oct. 13	Minnesota
8	Sat. Oct. 20	at Purdue
9	Sat. Oct. 27	Bye
10	Sat. Nov. 3	Nebraska
11	Sat. Nov. 10	at Michigan State
12	Sat. Nov. 17	at Maryland
13	Sat. Nov. 24	Michigan



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