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Celebrating 9 Years of Publishing



Queen City Champion

By Christopher Scott

Alicia Reece – fierce, champion, dedication; these are just a few of the words that can be used to describe Representative Reece. The representative of the “fighting 33rd district of Ohio,” previously served as President of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus and as Vice Mayor on Cincinnati City Council, chairing the Health Committee for six years. She is the former Assistant Director of Tourism for the State of Ohio but as she waves goodbye for the moment to Ohio statehouse what is the legacy she leaves behind.

Representative Reece leaves behind an unquestioned legacy of being a champion of not only justice reform, minority business, pushing the DNC’s platform but above all voting rights. While, Rep. Reece’s certainly gained notoriety for her proposal, John Crawford’s Law, which would require toy guns to feature prominent fluorescent strips or markers to distinguish them from real firearms adding to her record in



Alicia Reece

See Queen 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 add

ress 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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Ohio cuts income tax withholding rates

Beginning January 1, 2019, millions of Ohioans will be getting a bit more money in their paychecks. At the direction of Governor John R. Kasich, Tax Commissioner Joe Testa said today that Ohio will be reducing withholding rates used by employers to calculate required payroll deductions for the state income tax.

These reductions are the first change in state withholding rates since 2015. They come as a result of a 6.3% state income tax cut (H.B. 64) approved in 2015 that was not structured at the time to reduce withholding rates to match cuts in the tax rate.

“While the extra cash may not amount to more than few dollars in the average worker’s paycheck, I think most Ohioans would like to have that money in their own pockets rather than the state’s,” Tax Commissioner Joe Testa said.

Earlier this year, Gov. Kasich said that with state revenues showing stable growth and the

rainy-day fund holding robust reserves, he wanted to bring the income tax and withholding rates into alignment with the 2015 tax cut. The lower withholding rates, for one example, mean an Ohio taxpayer with taxable wages of \$60,000 a year and three dependents will take home about \$4.67 more each month. Reductions in withholding rates will not have a long-run impact on state tax revenues. However, reductions in withholding rates in FY 2019, which will not be offset by lower refunds to taxpayers until FY 2020, will have a one-time fiscal impact, reducing revenues in FY 2019 by approximately \$153 million (the General Revenue Fund impact will be approximately \$147 million).

Testa said these withholding reductions complete the expansive package of income tax cuts initiated by Gov. Kasich that have reduced tax rates by 16% since 2011 and helped save Ohio taxpayers more than \$5 billion. “The Kasich tax cuts have repeatedly demonstrated that cutting taxes creates an economic climate friendly to job creators and a formula for future prosperity that helps more Ohioans participate in our state’s economic revival,” he said.

OhioMBE Awards Top FBE:

Young Achievers—Rita Jackson, Owner

Product/Service

Helping hands and caring for children and building life-time relationships. Preparing children in their developmental stage as preparation for elementary. Teaching them to feel good about who they are in life. It is not about where you are today, but where you can go.

Business Accomplishments:

Honored by the Mayor Frank Jackson at the Fairfax community fair for her longtime community service. She was recently honored for her commitment in the community by councilman Blaine Griffin and she received recognition as an upstanding citizen from City of Cleveland Ward 19 Councilwoman, Dona Brady.

Community Service Activities:

Every year for the past 20 years, she gives out book bags and school supplies to the families in need. This year she partnered with a Christian group. They purchased 200 book bags and supplies and distributed to deserving families. She also has distributed holiday gifts at Christmas time for over 20 years.



Rita Jackson

See OhioMBE Awards on page 4

Happy Holidays!

By Ronda Watson Barber

Happy Holidays! Merry Christmas! Happy Kwanzaa! Happy New Year! I wish you the best during this jubilant time of year. May you enjoy the wonders of this festive season.

Family, food, friends, football and shopping (hopefully, you are taking the OhioMBE Shopping Challenge and spending at least \$50 with a Black-owned business) it's the best time of the year.

I appreciate your readership!

Just my thoughts....rwb

The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa

Umoja (oo-MOH-jah): **Unity**

Success starts with Unity. Unity of family, community, nation and race.

Kujichagulia (koo-jee-chah-goo-LEE-ah): **Self-Determination**

To be responsible for ourselves.
To create your own destiny.

Ujima (oo-JEE-mah): **Collective work and responsibility**

To build and maintain your community together. To work together to help one another within your community.

Ujamaa (oo-jah-MAH): **Collective economics**

To build, maintain, and support our own stores, establishments, and businesses.

Nia (NEE-ah): **Purpose**

To restore African American people to their traditional greatness. To be responsible to Those Who Came Before (our ancestors) and to Those Who Will Follow (our descendants).

Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah): **Creativity**

Using creativity and imagination to make your communities better than what you inherited.

Imani (ee-MAH-nee): **Faith**

Believing in our people, our families, our educators, our leaders, and the righteousness of the African American struggle.



COLUMBUS – Jerome Jones, a small business advisor with a background in both economic development and lending, has joined the U.S. Small Business Administration's Columbus District Office as a lender relations specialist.

In his new role, Jones will conduct trainings and other outreach activities throughout central and southern Ohio to market the SBA's lending programs and services and help lenders grow their volume of SBA-guaranteed loans.



Jerome Jones

"I look forward to utilizing my experience as a banker and economic development professional to create relationships with lenders, small business owners and the SBA. Building this network will increase small business access to capital and help Ohio's economy grow as a result," Jones said.

For small businesses at any stage, access to capital can mean the difference between success and failure, and SBA-guaranteed loans can fill that need. The agency doesn't lend money directly to small business owners, but sets guidelines for loans made by its partnering lenders, community development organizations, and micro-lending institutions. Lender relations specialists like Jones play a critical role in supporting and educating lenders about how the SBA can help their customers.

"We're thrilled to have someone with Jerome's experience and background join the SBA Columbus District team," said SBA Columbus Deputy District Director Scot Hardin. "He brings a wealth of knowledge that will help us expand our message and support lenders throughout the district."

Most recently, Jones served as a business advisor for the Ohio Small Business Development Center at Columbus State Community College. Prior to holding that position, he served as the Vice President of Lending for the Economic and Community Development Institute. He has held other small business development positions at Telhio Credit Union, Key Bank and the Community Capital Development Corporation. Jones is also an active volunteer in Central Ohio, having served on the United Way of Central Ohio Finance Committee and as a member of the board for the Columbus Urban League. He is a graduate of Jackson State University and Franklin University.

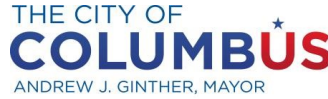
"The best advice I can give to small business owners is to take advantage of the many resources available, many of which are provided at no cost to you," Jones said.

bid opportunities

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



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>



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 mfarrenkopf@columbus.gov) or Seth Brehm (614-645-5659 or shwbrehm@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).

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Project: Mobility Solutions Marketing & Communications
Ref. #: RFQ010961
Type: RFP
Status: OPEN
Open Date: Nov 26th 2018, 2:30 PM EST
Questions Due: Dec 7th 2018, 5:00 PM EST

Closing Date: Dec 17th 2018, 1:00 PM EST

The Smart Columbus Program Management Office (PMO) is seeking qualified integrated marketing communications agencies to submit proposals to develop and execute an innovative, data-driven, consumer-facing integrated marketing campaign that will shift consumer behavior from single car occupancy to multi-modal transportation through a new Multi-Modal Trip Planning Application/Common Payment System (MMTPA/CPS) and Smart Mobility Hubs (SMH).

See full RFP at www.OhioMBE.com/bid-opportunities

OhioMBE Awards from page 2

Rita Jackson continues to provide a healthy, safe and structured environment for children. She always put herself last and will always go above and beyond the call of duty to help and assist people in need. She understands that God doesn't make leaders, he make servants and servants become leaders.

Contact: msrita.jackson@yahoo.com

bid opportunities

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*Be at war with your vices, at
peace with your neighbors, and
let every new year find you a*

better man. — Benjamin Franklin

National Tax Security Awareness

With the holiday shopping season in full swing, the Internal Revenue Service and Security Summit partners warn taxpayers to take extra steps to protect their tax and financial data from identity thieves.

The holidays offer cybercriminals a chance to steal financial account information, Social Security numbers, credit card information and other sensitive data to help them file a fraudulent tax return in 2019.

“With tax season quickly approaching, people should be extra careful during the holidays to protect their sensitive tax and financial data,” said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. “Taking a few simple steps can protect this valuable information and help prevent someone from stealing a tax refund. Taxpayers guarding their information also helps strengthen protections against identity thieves taken by the IRS, the states and the tax industry.”

Cybercriminals seek to turn stolen data into quick cash, either by draining financial accounts, charging credit cards, creating new credit accounts or even using stolen identities to file a fraudulent tax return for a refund.

Here are seven steps to help with online safety and protecting tax returns and refunds:

- *Avoid unprotected Wi-Fi.* Unprotected public Wi-Fi hotspots in malls or at holiday events also may allow thieves to view transactions. Do not engage in online financial transactions if using unprotected public Wi-Fi.
- *Shop at familiar online retailers.* Generally, sites using the “s” designation in “https” at the start of the URL are secure. Look for the “lock” icon in the browser’s URL bar. But remember, even bad actors may obtain a security certificate so the “s” may not vouch for the site’s legitimacy. Beware of purchases at unfamiliar sites or clicks on links from pop-up ads.
- *Learn to recognize and avoid phishing emails that pose as a trusted source such as those from financial institutions or the IRS.* The IRS has seen an increase in these schemes this year. These emails may suggest a password is expiring or an account update is needed. The criminal’s goal is to entice users to open a link or attachment. The link may take users to a fake website that will steal usernames and passwords. An attachment may download malware that tracks keystrokes -- putting personal information at risk.
- *Keep a clean machine.* This applies to all devices – computers, phones and tablets. Use security software to protect against malware that may steal data and viruses that may damage files. Set it to update automatically so that it always has the latest security defenses. Make sure firewalls and browser defenses are always active. Avoid “free” se-

See IRS on page 9

Ramona Peterson Co-Owner
Lecole Daniels Co-Owner



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Queen from page 1

which she has worked closely with Rev. Al Sharpton and other minority community leaders as well as the National Action Network to combat police brutality, reduce gun violence, and create safer communities across the state perhaps her greatest feat was the advocacy for the voting bill of rights.

There is no question that Ohio has struggled with voting rights issues, not only the canceling of Golden Week (where citizens could register to vote and vote at the same time) but the unwanted attention of purging inactive voters from the voter rolls. Rep. Reece has fought and clawed through proposed legislation and ballot initiative that Ohio adds a Voter Bill of Rights to the constitution as well as other states throughout the nation. Recently in working with that state up North (Michigan) they passed it as a ballot measure. Among other noteworthy workings, Representative Reece worked with the governor to get 1.4 million additional dollars for summer youth employment.

In her farewell address to the general assembly Rep. Reece stated "Position is something that is happening today, its term limited, someone can take it from you, but purpose is what God puts upon you that is your personal assignment, and that is why the voter bill of rights is one of the things I am committed to... Furthermore, my goal in life is to make sure that everyone has an equal shot at the American dream; I would like to thank God... my family... but most importantly I would like to thank all who voted for me, know that this is not the end but the continuation."

While we may not know exactly what is on the horizon for Rep. Reece, we do know that we can count on her still championing our causes.

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Business Attorney and Registered Patent Attorney

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Happy Holidays

5 TIPS FOR CREATING PRESENTATIONS THAT WILL WOW YOUR AUDIENCE

The experience of creating presentations and then delivering them to an audience usually falls into two categories: the presentation is warmly received, achieving the desired result of getting people interested to learn more about your business — or the response is so flat and empty, you can hear crickets chirping in the conference room.

Anyone who's given a presentation can relate to these outcomes. On the flipside, anyone who's ever been an audience member during a boring and seemingly interminable presentation likely vowed to never repeat the experience.

How can you prepare and deliver a presentation that's entertaining, informative and makes your business more memorable in the minds of the audience members? Here are five key tips for creating presentations that leave your audiences wanting to learn more:

1. Keep Text to a Minimum. The principle of "less is more" is nowhere as relevant as in a business presentation. Too many words on a slide or screen not only slows the pace of a presentation, it obliges the audience to read, rather than listen to, what you're saying.

Use no more than six bullet points per slide and no more than six words per bullet. (Also avoid complete sentences, unless you're repurposing a quote.)

2. Choose a Readable Font. Ditch the creative urge to splash the screen with multiple fonts. If getting a message across is your key objective (and what else is a presentation for, really?), stick to standard sans serif fonts like Helvetica, Arial or Calibri — which are all easy for viewers to read quickly.

3. Select Images Carefully. In business presentations, the right multimedia trumps the best words *every time*. Capitalize on human preference for imagery over text by selecting the right pictures for your purposes. Keep these additional tips in mind:

- One image per slide is generally the most effective.
- "Images" may also refer to graphs (to convey data points) and diagrams (to illustrate how a business process works). Again, opt for simplicity.
- Balance images with whitespace for a clean look. If you don't, your slides may seem unprofessional and can lead to confusion.

4. Look for the Right Balance of Colors and Contrast. Both the words and images you choose will have more impact with the right level of contrast against the background. A single-color background or an attractive bar of color is preferable to multiple colors and elaborate designs. Contrasting black and yellow, for example, is both eye-catching and memorable.

One additional point: If the presentation involves your business brand, incorporate the brand colors — typically a primary

See Presentations on page 9

Networking Tips: Connecting With The Business Specialist

Networking is not just about attending events. It is also about attending meetings, making strategic connections and growing your networks. Likewise, relationship building and planning are key components for successful networking. Networking can be a critical piece in business development. Being able to meet the right contacts and further your agenda can lead to a plethora of opportunities.

Listed below are tips for engaging in effective conversations with business specialists.

Step One

Whether you meet a business specialist at a conference, meeting, mixer or other function, make sure that you are properly prepared. Have a dynamic elevator pitch which concisely highlights your company, capabilities, target audience and value proposition. Carry up to date marketing materials such as business cards, flyers, postcards and other useful information. Direct the conversation along the lines of offering information rather than selling a product or service. In the process, listen closely, pay attention and show respect. These types of non-verbal communication cues can build your brand and likeability with the other person.

Step Two

Once you have made a connection and scheduled your meeting, it is imperative to do your due diligence. Make sure that all of your information, materials and internet presence are aligned, correct and up to date. Feel free to reach out via email or phone to remind your counterpart of the session 1 or 2 days in advance. Be available to correspond before the meeting and update your counterpart on any changes to the meeting. Always arrive a few minutes early in the case that you are meeting outside of your location.

Step Three

Use the meeting as an opportunity to show professionalism and competency. Lead with confidence and adhere to the length of the scheduled meeting. Share presentations, demos, resources etc. and create a platform to do business. Follow through and offer to have another meeting as a continuation or to propose new ideas or content. As always, thank the business specialist for their time and follow up in a timely manner.

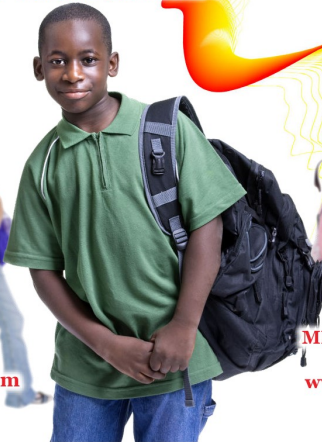
Use these tips to sharpen your networking skills. By connecting with these type of individuals, you are able to progress in your endeavors and achieve good success.

Chi Chi Okezie is owner/producer of SIMPLEnetworking, LLC in Atlanta, GA. Learn tips, tactics and techniques from the Champion Networker! Visit the SN Official Website: <http://www.snseminars.com> to read excerpts of her books, sign up for her newsletter, register for events and classes or visit her blog!

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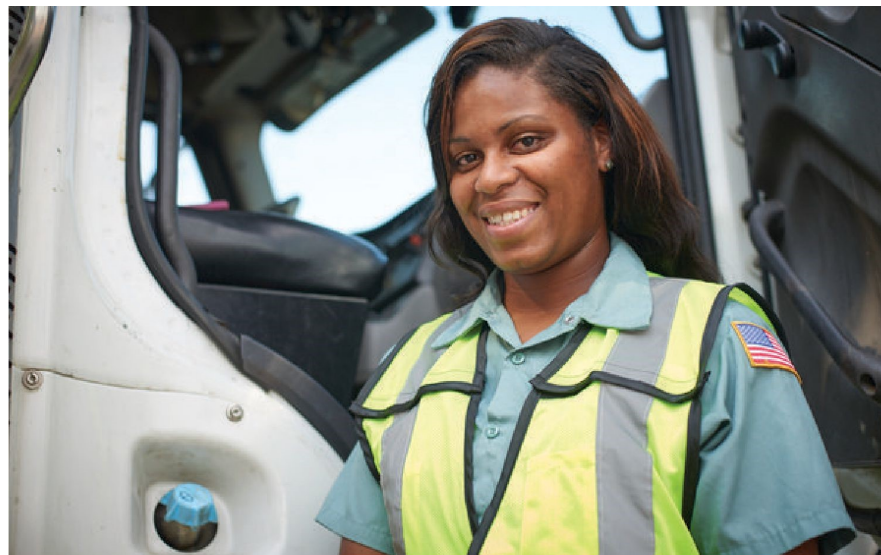


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curity scans or pop-up advertisements for security software.

- *Use passwords that are strong, long and unique.* Experts suggest a minimum of 10 characters but longer is better. Avoid using a specific word; longer phrases are better. Use a combination of letters, numbers and special characters. Use a different password for each account. Use a password manager, if necessary.
- *Use multi-factor authentication.* Some financial institutions, email providers and social media sites allow users to set accounts for multi-factor authentication. This means users may need a security code, usually sent as a text to a mobile phone, in addition to usernames and passwords.
- *Encrypt and password-protect sensitive data.* If keeping financial records, tax returns or any personally identifiable information on computers, this data should be encrypted and protected by a strong password. Also, back-up important data to an external source such as an external hard drive. And, when disposing of computers, mobile phones or tablets, make sure to wipe the hard drive of all information before trashing.

Source: irs.gov

Presentations page 7

and secondary brand color — per your company's brand guidelines. This helps reinforce credibility and consistency.

5. Skip The 'Flashy' Stuff. The impulse to "dazzle" your audience with clever slide transitions and intriguing sound effects should be checked at the door. Building in these special effects is not just distracting, it also tends to slow the computer you're relying on to run your presentation. Your focus should be on conveying your message effectively, so only use those flashy elements when they help support that goal.

Creating presentations can be fun and engaging, as long as you keep simplicity and the interests (and attention) of your audience in mind at all times.

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City of Columbus promotes inclusion in all departments

The Department of Development of the City of Columbus received the Frank W. Watson Advocacy Award at the annual OhioMBE Awards event on October 25. Ronda Watson Barber, publisher/editor of OhioMBE, cited the Department's "small business efforts and procurement outreach to minority and women owned businesses" in presenting the award to the department.

"We are honored to receive this award. The Department of Development has made diversity and inclusion part of how we do our jobs every day—it is truly a part of our department's DNA," said Steve Schoeny, Director of the Department of Development.

Mayor Ginther has made enhancing diversity and inclusion a core city initiative. In the past 12 months, the Department of Development as well as every other City department has creat-



City of Columbus
Dept. of Development
Frank W. Watson
Advocacy Award
2018



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Support Black Media

Kim Coleman is ECDI's new Chief Credit Officer

Recently, the Economic & Community Development Institute (ECDI) welcomed Kim Coleman to the team as Chief Credit Officer (CCO).



ECDI provides small businesses, across all 88 counties in Ohio, with lending and business training services. As CCO, Ms. Coleman oversees ECDI's credit underwriting processes, ensuring all policies remain compliant with its enhancement programs.

Ms. Coleman, comes to ECDI with more than 30 years of experience in finance. Her career began at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), where she became an expert in small business lending, and familiarized herself with the barriers faced by entrepreneurs, when trying to access funding. After 10 years at the SBA, Ms. Coleman moved into the private sector, working with various finance institutions, as they developed small business lending pro-

See ECDI on page 8

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We will be doing some spring cleaning!

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