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*Advocating, Informing and Promoting Small & Minority Owned Businesses since 2009*

## Meet US Senator Candidate: Morgan Harper

My name is Morgan Harper, and I'm a Democrat running for the open U.S. Senate seat to guarantee an opportunity for every Ohioan.

I was born in Columbus to a teenager and spent the first few months of my life in a foster home before being adopted and raised by a public-school teacher. My mother poured everything into my education. That's what put me in a position to earn scholarships to attend Princeton University and Stanford Law School, and eventually work in Washington, D.C. at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau during the Obama administration.

At the CFPB, we went after the large financial institutions that caused the financial and foreclosure crisis that wiped away a lot of the wealth our community had accrued via homeownership. It is part of the reason that the racial wealth gap has only widened with the median white family having

\$189,000 in wealth compared to just \$24,000 for Black families. We will not be able to close this gap by just working hard at our jobs. This gap is even starker for Black women given we are typically paid a fraction of our peers.

We need pathways to start and grow businesses to accelerate wealth building and leadership in Washington to get it done. Entrepreneurship shouldn't only be for the ultra-wealthy. We have to directly invest in small businesses and entrepreneurs who need resources, especially people of color and in rural areas. If we want to see Black-owned enterprises thrive, we have to take real action to make it happen.

We must pass Medicare for All to bolster federal support for small business owners and expand health coverage for every American, regardless of socio-economic background. If we have a universal healthcare system, small business owners will not have to provide healthcare benefits and can instead focus on investing in their businesses and expanding employment. Also, more of us, especially aspiring Black and Black women entrepreneurs, will be freer to take the important leap of starting a business without fear of losing healthcare coverage, including for our children, tied to our employment.

There is tremendous economic opportunity in Medicare for All, and a lot more Ohioans are in favor of this policy than you'd think. Just a month ago, Cleveland Heights City Council introduced local legislation calling for universal healthcare in America with a resolution in support of the Medicare For All Act of 2021, proposed nearly a year ago in Congress. For a large majority of Ohioans, and especially business owners, this would be a game-changer.

Another federal program that saw great success for some was the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which provided loans to help businesses stay afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to replicate the good aspects of this program and make sure these forgivable loans are equitably distributed. Reveal News did an analysis of 5 million PPP loans and found widespread racial disparities in how those loans were distributed. Given our communities typically

*See Morgan on page 4*





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OhioMBE welcomes letters to the editor from readers. Typed letters of 350 words or less are preferred. Each letter must include name, home address and daytime phone number. Some letters may appear on our website.

## The Ohio Business Development Center Construction

The Ohio Business Development Center is gearing up for its third series of providing construction skills training to area small contractors. There is a tremendous need to supplemental training for area small, minority and female owned construction companies.



The lack of technical and administrative skills is a barrier. Small construction companies can not participate in the growing construction economy, if they are unable to read construction documents and prepare bids. Most small contractors are very skilled at their craft, but lack construction management training.

The series will include training in reading construction documents, how to prepare a bid, scheduling, protecting your brand, business certifications, loans, bonding, accounting for contractors and legal issues for contractors.

“We are excited about the upcoming course offering for the OBDC Construction Academy. The goal is to help enhance the skills of area contractors,” said OBDC CEO Ronda Watson Barber. “We are partnering with some really great experts to help build the capacity of our clients. There are big construction opportunities on the horizon and we want to make sure our contractors are ready.”

The OBDC Construction Academy is hosted by the City of Columbus Planroom, 1393 E. Broad St. Registration opens on April 8. Visit [OHBDC.org](http://OHBDC.org) for information.

## Got your Black Card?



The Ohio Black Card and its mobile app have the mission of fostering business between Black-owned companies.

The mobile app features the electronic copy of OhioMBE, a business directory, a list of contracting opportunities, a collection of upcoming events, business resources and a bevy of vendors who will offer a discount when presented with the Ohio Black Card.

The Ohio Black Card mobile app is available on Google Play and The App Store.

Don't have THE Ohio Black Card? Visit [BlackCardOhio.com](http://BlackCardOhio.com) and get yours. The card is FREE. If you are a business who wants to be an Ohio Black Card vendor, please email [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com)

# Stop the Violence!

# publisher's note

## White men are the beneficiaries Columbus City Schools LEDE purchasing program

By Ronda Watson Barber  
OhioMBE Publisher

The state's largest public school finally responded to my request for the LEDE utilization numbers for the school term 2020-2021. I sent FIVE requests to Dr. David James, Deputy Superintendent, Operations. It is my understanding that the request was forwarded to the demoted COO Maurice Oldham and the interim Purchasing Director. I sent an email to Board Member Michael Cole to secure the report. He didn't respond. Only after notifying the entire elected board, did I finally receive a copy.

Thanks, Judge Brown for your prompt attention to the matter and for forwarding me a copy of the spending numbers.

Columbus City Schools again failed to meet the 20 percent purchasing goal as stated in the board policy. The district spent 14% of \$274,708,082 with disadvantaged businesses. It appears white men continue to be the beneficiary of the program. White children represent only 21% of the enrolled students.

The policy states: *The Board affirms its commitment to its "Equity Policy." The School District seeks to include LEDEs in all aspects of its contracting for construction, professional and non-professional services, and procurement of goods and supplies activities by adopting this statement (this "LEDE Statement"). Specifically, the LEDE Statement seeks to achieve the goal of awarding to LEDEs School District contracts and procurements which represent at least twenty percent (20%) of all dollars spent on an annual basis by the School District for contracting and procurement purposes (the "LEDE Participation Goal"). The School District is committed to ensuring that all citizens and/or lawfully admitted permanent residents in the School District community who are qualified contractors, subcontractors, professionals, suppliers, and other service providers have a fair and equitable opportunity to participate in the contracting and procurement activities of the School District.*

For the school term 2020-2021

- 88 LEDE companies received contracts
- 47 Black companies received \$13,560,1398.98 or 35.5% of spending
- 18 White companies received \$20,330,256.42 or 53% of spending

## IT'S OUR TURN.

HELP ELECT OHIO'S  
FIRST PERSON OF COLOR AND  
FIRST WOMAN U.S. SENATOR.



ELECTION DAY  
MAY 3

f i t d @MH4OH  
MORGANHARPER.ORG

Paid for by Morgan Harper for Ohio



- The district spent \$274,708,082 overall
- \$38,181,451.91 was spent with LEDE businesses
- 14% was spent with disadvantaged businesses

I am not going to get a response from the district. The numbers speak for themselves. They give me the same rhetoric every year. I do have questions:

- Why can't the district meet the 20% purchasing goal?
- Why is legislation forwarded to the Board that doesn't include LEDE participation?
- Why are white companies receiving half of the contracts?
- Should the district establish a program for Black vendors?
- Should the district establish a program for Columbus City School graduates?
- Who is advocating for Black businesses?

Where is the equity for Black businesses in Columbus City Schools? Aside from the Outreach Coordinator, who is looking out for Black vendors?

Just my thoughts...rwb

  We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war, but on the positive affirmation of peace ~ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

# bid opportunities

To post a bid notice, call 614-522-9122 or email [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com)



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority is requesting proposals for Document Imaging Services.

Those interested in submitting a proposal for the aforementioned work may obtain the instructions/information package by contacting the AMHA IT Department at (330) 374-3007 ext. 1726 or [eyan@akronhousing.org](mailto:eyan@akronhousing.org).

Proposals, to be considered, must be submitted in accordance with the requirements of the RFP and received by AMHA no later than 4:00 p.m. (local time) on Tuesday, April 12, 2022.

Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Debbie Barry  
Interim Executive Director



## INVITATION TO BID B22002

The Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority at 100 West Cedar Street, Akron, Ohio 44307 will receive sealed bids until 2:00 p.m. local time on Thursday, April 14, 2022 at which time and place bids will be publicly opened and read aloud for:

### **Pinewood Parking Lot Improvement and Related Work 8788 Ray Court, Twinsburg, Ohio 44087**

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

To be considered Bids must be received by AMHA no later than 2:00 p.m. (local time) on Thursday April 14, 2022. Questions contact Carla Horton, Contracting Officer at 330-376-7128. Persons with disabilities needing assistance are asked to contact AMHA's ADA Coordinator, 100 West Cedar Street, Akron Ohio 44307, 330-762-9631 or Ohio Relay at 800-750-0750 at least seven (7) days in advance.

Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Debbie Barry  
Interim Executive Director



## **Columbus City Schools seeks LEDE vendors**

### **How do I become a Local Economically Disadvantaged Enterprise (LEDE) Vendor with Columbus City Schools?**

Your Columbus City Schools Vendor Number allows you to conduct business with the School District.

You must first complete the CCS Vendor Application by visiting: [www.columbus.k12.oh.us](http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us).

Click VENDORS and complete the On-Line Vendor Registration and provide all pertinent information or by contacting the district's Purchasing Department at: (614) 365-5820.

Once registered as a Vendor with Purchasing, please complete the Local Economically Disadvantaged Enterprise (LEDE) Vendor Affidavit also on the district's website. This form must be Signed and Notarized. You can also contact the Outreach Office at: (614) 365-8732 or [outreachservices@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:outreachservices@columbus.k12.oh.us)

*Morgan from page 1*

have less access to generational wealth that can be used as seed money to start a business, these types of no-interest loan opportunities are essential to growing small businesses and closing the racial wealth gap. We need to enforce antitrust laws at the federal level to ensure our small businesses are able to compete in a truly free market.

And finally, we need accountability when big economic development deals like Intel come to Central Ohio to ensure Black-owned contractors participate and capture part of these huge opportunities for our state.

As your U.S. Senator, I will be committed to advancing this agenda so we can pursue our American dreams and make Ohio a state of the future. Some structural issues stand in the way of more Black entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs being able to compete, and we need federal leadership to address these issues directly.

It's time for a new path forward. I would very much appreciate your support in the upcoming Democratic primary election on May 3rd.

# OhioMBE.com



# bid opportunities

To post a bid notice, call 614-522-9122 or email [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com)



**COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
COMMUNITY. COMMITMENT. COLLABORATION.

## INVITATION FOR BIDS HARRIET'S HOPE NEW BUILD

The Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) will receive bids from qualified contractors for Harriet's Hope New Build, 1581 W. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio. All bids will be accepted and publicly opened on **Thursday, May 12, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.**, during a virtual bid opening, via Zoom. The link will be provided 48 hours before the bid opening at <https://cmhanet.com/Business/ConstructionContracts> or email Chris Belcastro ([cbelcastro@cmhanet.com](mailto:cbelcastro@cmhanet.com)) to obtain the link before the bid opening and **no later than 10:00 a.m. on May 12, 2022**. Since the bid opening will be virtual, bids are preferred to be mailed. However, bids will still be accepted if they are dropped off in person **before 11:00 a.m. on May 12, 2022** and are time stamped. If you plan to drop off your bid, please notify the security officer at the front door of a "BID," and they will time stamp it. A pre-bid meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, April 14, 2022, at 11:00 a.m.** Please contact Chris Belcastro to obtain the link. Contract Documents may be viewed at <https://cmhanet.com/Business/ConstructionContracts>. Bidders may obtain Contract Documents from DC Alpha Graphics, 1254 Courtland Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, 43201 or at [www.dcplanroom.com](http://www.dcplanroom.com); Phone: 614-297-1200; Fax: 614-297-1300, starting **Monday, April 4, 2022**, upon receipt of a **refundable company check or money order for \$50.00**, payable to CMHA. Bidders must agree to comply with the Davis-Bacon Labor Standards of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development and Section 3 of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended. Bidders are asked to assist CMHA in meeting their Minority Business Enterprise goal of 20% and Section 3 goal of 10%. A 5% bid bond must be submitted with the bid.

**Support  
Black  
Businesses**



The Columbus Zoo Family of Parks are encouraging interested website design agencies to submit proposals to the attached Request for Proposal (RFP).

We are requesting proposals from creative agencies who can elevate our new branding to provide a redesign of our current websites. Our websites are our largest digital asset and it should be able to showcase our points of pride regardless if a user is on desktop or a mobile device. Ultimately our goal is to increase in user experience and best represents our Family of Parks. This RFP will also be posted on various chamber and business association boards.

Please adhere to the due dates within the RFP if you are interested in submitting your proposal, if you are not interested please let us know so we can take you off our list.

Nicolle Gómez Racey, VP of Communication and Marketing, is the main point of contact for this RFP. All questions should be directed to Nicolle by email only at [nicolle.racey@columbuszoo.org](mailto:nicolle.racey@columbuszoo.org).

The deadline to submit your proposal is **5:00PM (EST) Monday, April 18, 2022**.

View the RFP at <https://ohiombe.com/archives/18573>



## LEGAL NOTICE 4077 KARL ROAD MISCELLANEOUS FACILITIES RENOVATIONS REBID

Sealed bids for the above-referenced project will be received by the **BOARD OF EDUCATION**, City School District of Columbus, Ohio, Office of Capital Improvements, 889 E. 17th Ave, Columbus OH 43211, until Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. More information can be found on the District's web site at <http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/rfp>. The plans and specifications are on file with Franklin Imaging.

**Stop the Violence!**



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**Why you should 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.

Attend a class and learn how to get your business certified. Visit [OHBDC.eventbrite.com](http://OHBDC.eventbrite.com) for the upcoming class schedule.



**REGISTER TODAY!**

*April 25-26, 2022*

Ohio's 5th Annual  
**Civil Rights Transportation Symposium**

**"Adapting and Advancing: The Future is Now"**



This year's event will be hybrid (both in-person and virtual). Registration information at [transportation.ohio.gov/odotcivilrights](http://transportation.ohio.gov/odotcivilrights).

Hosted by:



**4 PAGE BUSINESS PLAN**  
*for New & Existing Businesses*

Wednesday  
April 6 & May 4  
1:00 pm

register now

[IncreaseDiversity.eventbrite.com](http://IncreaseDiversity.eventbrite.com)



*Ambrose Moses III*  
Esq., CED Educator, Central State  
University



**MBE hio**  
**COFFEE & CONSTRUCTION**

**Business Showcase**

**Construction Updates**

- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority
- Kokosing Industrial

**Networking**

April 20 @ 8:00 am

**CoffeeConstruction.us**



**Support Black Media**

Keep up-to-date at [OhioMBE.com](http://OhioMBE.com)  
or the Ohio Black Card



*"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."* - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

# Ohio Diversity Network

Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 9:00am  
[Cleveland SBA – Preparing for Construction Season Webinar](#)

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 1:00pm  
[The 4-Page Business Plan for New & Existing Businesses](#)

Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 10:00am  
[It's All About Credit](#)

Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 2:00pm  
[OBDC – Certification Assistance](#)

Saturday, April 9, 2022 at 11:00am  
[Sis, Can We Talk?: Health and Wellness Conversations Surrounding WOC](#)

Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at 1:00pm  
[LLC vs Corporation vs Sole Proprietorship](#)

Thursday, April 14, 2022 at 2:00pm  
[OBDC – Certification Assistance](#)

Monday, April 18, 2022 at 7:00pm  
[Xtreme Gospel Comedy Night](#)

Tuesday, April 19, 2022 at 8:00am  
[Coffee & Construction](#)

Friday, April 22, 2022 at 11:30am  
[Real Talk: Women in the Workforce](#)



*OhioDiversityNetwork.com is sponsored by:*



Hosting a business event?  
Did you know you can  
post it on OhioDiversityNetwork.com?

Email: [news@ohiombe.com](mailto:news@ohiombe.com) for login information

## ADVERTISE



An advertisement for Making a Difference Inc. It features a portrait of Al Edmondson, the founder, in a suit and tie, smiling. The background shows a cityscape with tall buildings. The text "Support Black-Owned Businesses" is prominently displayed in a large, blue, serif font. Below the portrait, there is a quote from Al Edmondson: "Every Step Makes a Difference." and the website address "www.madinc.net". The logo for Making a Difference Inc. is in the top right corner.