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## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Mission of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania is to provide access and opportunities to African American businesses and professionals throughout the region.*

*Guided by the core values of equity in opportunity, economic advancement, self-sufficiency and entrepreneurial excellence, we will seek to advance economic parity by insuring full participation.*

**AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA  
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DORIS CARSON WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT**

## **WELCOME**

**This newsletter is prepared solely for members and sponsors of the African American Chamber of Commerce.**

**-Begin the New Year  
PowerBreakfast Meeting  
January 21, 2000  
7:30 a.m. Rivers Club  
Presidential  
Roundtable Member  
John Brouse, President  
Highmark Blue Cross  
Blue Shield  
R.S.V.P. Early!**

As we approach the end of the century, this is the end of the first year of operation for the Chamber Office. This newsletter will recap some of the highlights.

A big thanks goes to two companies who helped get the ball rolling: Marc Advertising for developing our logo which uniquely depicts the parity we wish to achieve, and to WPXI for the series of public service announcements on how to get involved and join the Chamber. The power of television truly works! The membership base has grown to 220 members and the number of sponsors has

increased to over 17 companies. Thanks to Co-Chairs Tom Usher, of USX and Dick Simmons of Allegheny Teledyne, the Presidential Roundtable Members are purchasing goods and services from our members. A full line of health care and life insurance services, payroll and background credit check information is available to all members.

We have our own website (the address will be shortened next year) and professional membership directory produced by our members Bynum Advertising and Seymour Graphics! The office receives calls from people wishing to make individual purchases. Nine Power Breakfast Meetings were held, Six Educational Seminars, & Four Evening Mixers were held for members including one to introduce our members to now

County Executive-Jim Roddey.

The Chamber hosted a business briefing with state and local elected officials, government department heads, and representatives of our Board of Directors to discuss the implications support for Plan B. The Chamber was represented in Harrisburg, along with hundreds from the Pittsburgh area, in a demonstration to show the Governor why the legislation should be approved. So far, Chamber members have received over \$10 million in contracts on the two stadiums. As the expansion of the Convention Center gets underway, we expect members to receive contracts. Congratulations to Advanced Technology Systems, a member of the joint venture!

Our office also served as host to Urban Retail Properties to learn how Chamber Members will be included in the new Fifth & Forbes Corridor. A recent meeting was held and a more in-depth discussion will take place in late January. Three corporate

meetings were held for members to learn how to do business with their companies. Each session has already begun to produce results by the contracts awarded. Business and government have begun to use our office as a resource center for disseminating bid and contract information.

Our first business luncheon was attended by over 450 individuals from the business community, exchanging business cards and getting to know one another. The Governor delivered greetings (via video) Member Mulu Birru was recognized on behalf of the founding fathers of the Chamber, and both he and Dick Simmons were honored for their commitment to the growth of African American business development as Co-Chair of the Presidential Round-table. A special thanks to Paul O'Neill, chairman & chief executive officer of ALCOA for his keynote address. If you missed it, you missed a treat.

You are represented on the River Life Commission for developing the river front along the North Shore. This too should prove beneficial.

The Chamber is pleased to announce that Rick Winter, Dean of Katz Graduate School of

Business University of Pittsburgh is helping us prepare to redo our strategic plan. In order for that to happen, we need your input. You will be receiving a questionnaire in the upcoming weeks. **Please** take time and complete it before mailing it back to the office. Once the process is completed, you will receive a copy the new strategic plan.

Several of our members were featured in the New Pittsburgh Courier over the past year. Congratulations to the Managing Editor, member Rodd Doss, appointed to the Editorial Committee of Pittsburgh Prospect Magazine.

The Chamber recently served as host to Deputy Assist. Secretary Philip Vasquez- U.S. Department of Energy. Our utility and energy members attended a reception and held one on one chats with the Deputy.

By now everyone has received a letter from Chairman Bob Agbede and I encouraging you to support the United Way Campaign. Remember you can use donor option, but most importantly, please support the campaign.

#### CONGRATULATIONS

The Chamber was honored to receive the Outstanding Minority Enterprise Resource Partner Award from the Small Business Administration this fall.

Congratulations to Exico's President member Eustace Uku for being named SBA's Minority Advocate of the Year.

Hats off to member George Miles for receiving FCC approval to sell WQEX, strengthening QED Communications. What a nice way to end the year.

Congratulations to Chairman Robert Agbede on his appointment to the National Petroleum Council, and member Frank Torbert of FLT Trading on his appointment to the National Coal Council (Advisory Group U.S. Dept. of Energy).

Join me in wishing retiring member Paul Ingram 'Well' as he leaves for his Florida Ponderosa and to member Bruce Douglas 'Good Luck' as he becomes the new President of PBA, Inc.-The Second Step.

The Homer S. Brown Law Association invites all members to attend their Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast Celebration on Monday, January 17th, 8:00 am at the Mt. Ararat Baptist Church. Rev. William Curtis will deliver the keynote

address and Byrd Brown, Esquire will receive the Drum Major for Justice Award. Call (412) 681-4430 to confirm your attendance.

#### WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

**Lorenzo Boone**  
Boone Financial Services

**Mame Bradley**,  
World Trade Center, Pgh

**Mel Causey**,  
Lemington Elder Care

**Jerry Cozewith**,  
American Red Cross:  
Southwestern Pennsylvania

**Denise Edmunds**,  
Edmunds Trucking

**Pam Golden**,  
Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

**Carl Greene**,  
Global Re-Refining, LTD.

**Jeff Bryant**,  
The Home Depot

**Denise Jones**,  
Jones Printing

**Bernard J. Mack**,  
State Farm Insurance Agency/Elizabeth, Pa.

**Dr Gregory Morris**,  
Billy Strayhorn Songs

**Lawrence D. Nelson**  
L.N. Mobile Welding Services, Inc.

**Robert Payne**,  
Cool Rider International

**M. Mustakeem**,  
MCC, Inc.

**Kenneth L. Roberts**  
Klar Enterprises, Inc.

**Vincent Sinabulya**,  
Gamut International, Inc.

**Charles 'Bobby' Short**, Slice Productions

**Michael Skinner**,