

AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

First Edition

OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

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Welcome. This first newsletter is to recap activities & provide you information on upcoming Chamber & member organizations' programs & events. A section will be dedicated to highlighting new members and other areas of interest. The mission of The African American Chamber is to provide access and opportunities to African American businesses and professionals throughout the region.

March 19th POWERBREAKFAST The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Executive Director Robert Kochanowski and Strategic Planning Director Beverly Pearson will provide an overview on the economic development and transportation plans for the region. The presentation will span the next 10 to 20 years and provide insight on the amount of growth projected to occur. Immediately following Bob and Beverly is Mr. Gene Harris, Senior Commercial Officer, US Liaison Office-European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Mr. Harris, originally from Oregon, works out of London. He will discuss how the bank promotes business opportunities in central & eastern Europe. Thanks to Mame Bradley at the World Trade Center Pittsburgh, Mr. Harris will be available on Thursday, March 18th for individual meetings with persons who have a serious interest in exporting their goods and services. Call Brigitte Lorin at (412) 227-3181 for an appointment.

Cost: \$20 members; \$25 non-members

ARE YOU YEAR 2000 COMPLIANT?

Then, immediately following the breakfast, Attorney Eugene Berry, Partner at Dickey McCamey & Chilcote Law Firm and Alexander Nicholas, President of Computer - Friend, will give a two-hour seminar on having electronic and computer equipment ready for the year 2000.

If you have a fax machine, personal computer, laptop, and or purchased software, plan to attend.

Cost : \$30-members \$35 non-members. Call the office to reserve your space.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Lorraine Ambrose, Early Childhood Initiative of the United Way
Howard Davis, MMC&P Spectrum Benefit Options
Tracy Foster, Vice President of Schults Ford
Loretta Goodwin, President of LLG & Associates
Cecelia Jenkins, President of Jenks t/b/a/ Georgia P. Carroll Movers
Dr. Lori-Linell Hall, CEO/Owner of Lori-Linell Hall, M.D.& Associates
Jason Matthews, President & Curtis Aiken, CEO of SGS Group, LLC
Ronald Hightower, President Hightower, Inc.
Rhonda Carson Leach, President Dial-R-Construction
Robert Lavelle, President Dwelling House Savings & Loan Assoc.
Marcel T. Means, President of Haymakers Imprinted Sportswear
Odell Peoples
Michael B. Russell, H. J. Russell and Company
Eric Strong, President of Strong Cleaners, Inc.
Shelia Washington, President of Washington Consulting Group
Darryl Ford-Williams, President of Ford-Williams Agency
Elise Roby Yanders, Vice President & Financial Planner-Merrill Lynch
Charles L. Yanders, President of Pure-Flo Water Treatment
Don Williams, CEO of Williams Graphics, Inc.

January

The year got off to a very productive start. The debriefing that State Representatives Andrew Carn and Bill Robinson provided to the Board of Directors highlighted the need for minority inclusion as a part of the legislation to raise the state debt ceiling. Aiding in the discussion were Representative Joseph Preston & Councilman Sala Udin. Mulu Birru provided insight for everyone on how the funds for the stadiums and convention center projects flow through URA and County Economic Department; both under his supervision. The first meeting of this type, follow-up meetings will be held to insure we are all working on one common agenda: business opportunities. The final outcome was the legislation passed without Andrew Carn's vote (he didn't feel he received what was needed for Philadelphia, who is currently working on their plan).

The January Networking Mixer was attended by over 100 chamber members and prospects. County Commission Chairman Mike Dawaida gave remarks and his commitment to supporting African American businesses. Twelve new members were introduced at that meeting.

You were also represented at the following events: Guest Speaker at the Housing Opportunities Unlimited Graduation Dinner, Harrisburg Rally to support the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Legislation, and the Plans for Progress Meeting.

February

The Chamber was well promoted during Black History Month. Ads were on WJJJ and KQV News radio stations. In addition, commercials on

WPXI have continued to generate an overwhelming number of telephone calls for businesses and individuals on how to join, and what companies offer what services. The formal tracking of these referrals began in February. The POWERBREAKFAST was informative and packed with information for all members! A presentation was made on health, life insurance and business services available to chamber members, followed by a demonstration of our new website: www.realpittsburgh.com/community/groups/aaccwp (no spaces)



Employment Opportunities

The Port Authority is looking for qualified candidates for bus operator and maintenance positions on an ongoing basis. For more information, call (412) 237-7300, their Gold'N Opportunity Hotline.

A local downtown advertising agency is expanding and needs a person with 1-5 years experience in journalism or communications. Salary plus benefits. Send resumes to: **Box 303, 1739 East Carson Street Pittsburgh, Pa. 15203.**

WPXI is looking for college summer interns. They must be a junior or senior, majoring in communications. Call 237-4912 for more information.

The Minority Enterprise Corporation is having their Micro Enterprise Assistance Program **April 5th**. Cost:\$ 35 Call: 434-5806 for more information.

SBA held an open forum **March 8th** at the Federal Building, Room 200, from 10:00 am -12 noon. Al Jones & Don Carter were seeking feedback on SBA's programs and services; what you like and what you don't. This was an opportunity!

PA Department of General Services will be holding a session on Training Opportunities for Small Business Owners, **March 11th** from 10:00am - 1:00 PM, sponsored by the National Association of Minority Contractors. Call Christina Jumba for more information at 826-5653.

County Commission Chairman Mike Dawaida announced the county has allocated \$2 million dollars towards a small business loan fund. Tentative plans are to have the fund up and running by **April 1st**. Dr. Mulu Birru will be announcing when information is available. Stay tuned, the Chamber will keep you posted on the details.

Celebrate

President Robert Agbede is a candidate for the 1999 Western Pa. Exporter of the Year Award, sponsored by The Global Trade Institute. Good Luck!

First Vice President Chuck Powell is Co-Chair of this year's Black Extravaganza and Trailblazer Awards.

Second Vice President Gwen Allen helped to successfully engineer the Conference of Public Administrators having a broad warm welcome for their stay in Pittsburgh, beginning **March 10th**.

March 20th is Renaissance Publication's Black Extravaganza at Carnegie Music Hall. Call 391-8208 for more information.

NEWSLETTER