



**Inside Conditions**  
On the  
road again  
C3

# New Pittsburgh Courier BUSINESS

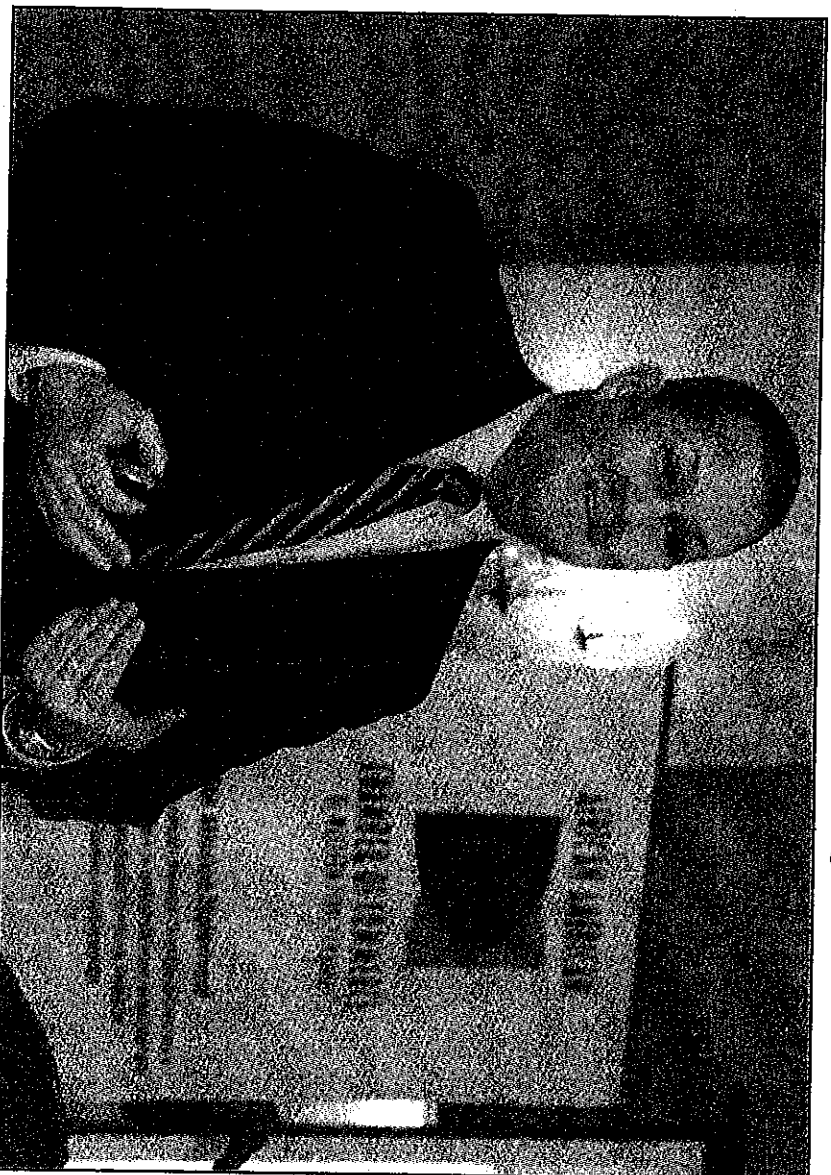
JANUARY 26-FEBRUARY 1, 2011

[www.newpittsburghcourier.com](http://www.newpittsburghcourier.com)

## LANKNESS CEO promotes diversity efforts

by Christian Morrow  
Courier Staff Writer

The African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania kicked off its new season of Power Breakfast meetings with a presentation by Randall Dearth, president and CEO of LANKNESS. LANKNESS, is a chemical company that was spun off from Bayer when it decided to concentrate solely on medical and health related products. As such, Dearth said, it was expected to fail. It was savaged in the business papers as "CrapCo" and the employees sentenced there from Bayer were frantic about it going belly up.



"I had one employee literally crying in my office because she thought she was going to lose everything and have to start from scratch after putting in a lot of years at Bayer," he said.

But Dearth wouldn't let that happen. He actually used the early negative press, introducing himself as the "president of CrapCo." The company is now the largest synthetic rubber producer in the world. Still German-owned, with headquarters in Finley Township and manufacturing facilities in Ohio, South Carolina and Texas, it did \$7.4 billion in sales last year.

"Unlike most presentations to the chamber, Dearth did not spend time discussing how members can do business with LANKNESS—because, as Chamber Presi-

**PROMOTING DIVERSITY**—Randall Dearth, president and CEO of LANKNESS tells the chamber he and his business are committed to growing and diversifying the regional workforce through development and recruiting.

dent and CEO Doris Carson Williams noted, there will be a special session dedicated exclusively to that, featuring all the company's procurement, raw materials and services personnel.

Dearth instead concentrated on his efforts as a board member of the Allegheny Conference on Economic Development to rebuild and diversify the region's workforce. He noted that China will produce 500,000 engineers this year, and India will produce 200,000. By comparison, the United States will produce 32,000.

The region, he said, is poised to provide 180,000 health services jobs, another 150,000 energy sector jobs, and to see growth in geo- and chemical engineering and advanced manufacturing. But we haven't been producing the workforce for those jobs. The conference along with the Vibrant Pittsburgh initiative is working to address that problem through workforce development and recruiting.

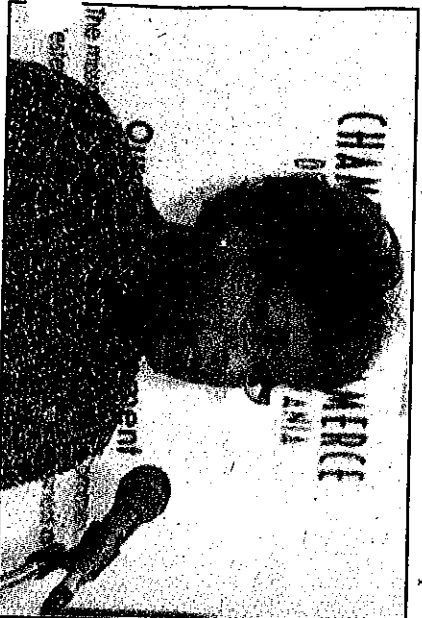
"We have a negative birthrate, 7,000 more people leaving than coming every year, 18 percent of our work-

force is over 55 and we're not attracting or retaining minorities when they make up 51 percent of those entering the workforce," he said. "We need to get back to injecting science education into the elementary schools—so kids think it's cool. And I have a vested interest because we're going to lose 50 percent of our chemical engineers in the next 5-10 years."

In addition to scheduling the "how to do business with LANKNESS" session, Williams noted that the speaker for February's Power Breakfast will be Kathryn Klaber, president and executive director of the Marcellus Shale Coalition, who will also introduce her procurement team. That will be followed up in April by a presentation from EQT on its Marcellus-related work.

The March breakfast will feature new Pittsburgh Superintendent of Schools Linda Lane. Williams also announced a business initiative workshop with Keith B. Keys, a business mentoring partnership with Steve Cullen of SCORE—like LANKNESS, a new chamber member—that will focus on marketing communications and coaching. Williams also introduces Norm Chandler of Oaktree Financial as a new member.

(Send comments to [cmorrow@newpittsburghcourier.com](mailto:cmorrow@newpittsburghcourier.com).)



**NEW GROWTH**—Chamber President and CEO Doris Carson Williams introduces new members and announces new initiatives at the Chamber's first Power Breakfast meeting of the year.