



## Season's Greetings from the President...

### Clifford Clarke

The Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce wishes you a safe, happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year. As your board president, it is a pleasure to recap 2017.

#### 2017 Recap

It was a productive year for your Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce. Below is a listing of just a few things we were able to accomplish in 2017.

- We reconstituted our board of directors and reinitialized our Board of Directors regular meetings
- We developed a full program calendar
- We updated our website with current information and a community calendar
- We have revised our membership application
- We relaunched our newsletter
- We have issued invitations to renew or join the chamber to many black and minority-owned businesses
- We hosted several small or emerging businesses at our chamber building
- We have advocated for local construction trades with city government and developers

#### Lessons Learned

Your Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce had a few lessons in 2017. We learned that momentum is challenging to maintain. Momentum, if not cultivated regularly will lead to inactivity or apparent inactivity. An all-volunteer chamber, including staff, is not the optimal way to operate an organization and maintain continuity. The Chamber did experience a loss in some momentum during 2016 and part of 2017. The strategies above have been implemented to address our momentum and to guide us back to focusing on the vision and mission of the Chamber.

Most recently, the Chamber had the good fortune to acquire the services of a temporary intern through a sponsorship program from a local organization, SCAN. Operationally, the intern helped us connect some important dots to our benefit. We are currently looking at other intern options. That is why your membership is so important to obtain resources that will help us move our vision, mission and agenda forward; which ultimately will create an economic environment of Benefits, Empowerment, Advocacy and Action.

#### Outlook for 2018

We expect a year of significant growth in 2018. We will need your support. We wish to leverage our positives from 2017. We will focus on networking that will enhance relationships, starting and staying in business, and provide answers to the many questions about corporate life. We also expect to recognize the black and minority businesses in our area. We communicate via Facebook, our website, our newsletter, and word-of-mouth. Watch for future events where we will focus on starting a business or building connections for established businesses.

Join your Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce the premier organization advocating for Black businesses in Fort Wayne.

### Board of Directors

Clifford Clarke, President  
C2IT Advisors

Linda Golden, VP  
LegacyOne Real Estate

William Muhammad, Sec.  
Company

Ralph Anderson  
Anderson Heating & AC

Don Cates  
3 Rivers Credit Union

George Eldridge Sr.  
Community Activist

Paul Hardy  
Company

Leroy Jackson Jr.  
Community Activist

Jacque Wilson  
Company

John Dortch, CEO  
The Preston Joan Group

Cozey Baker, CFO  
Afortus Financial  
Insurance Services

## Excerpt from Black Enterprise – *Business*

### Objectives

- ❖ To help businesses prosper and grow
- ❖ To increase employment opportunities
- ❖ To contribute to the overall economic stability of the community
- ❖ To provide members with cost effective services and benefits
- ❖ To advertise and to educate black businesses on how to obtain contracts
- ❖ To actively reach out to all black businesses and professionals
- ❖ To become intimately involved with each black business to assess their needs and opportunities for the next level of business
- ❖ To establish the chamber as an effective voice in government, politics and business
- ❖ To strategically grow our membership, to leverage our influence and to have a positive impact politically, economically and civically

### *Credit & Loans*

#### **5 Practical Steps to Manage Your Business Credit**

1. Determine whether you already have a business credit file
2. Establish a business credit history
3. Pay your bills on time and understand other factors that influence your credit rating
4. Monitor your credit file and keep it up to date
5. Monitor your customers' and vendors' credit (if applicable)

According to the Small Business Administration (SBA)

"Small business owners are entrepreneurs. They are successful because of their ideas, their passion, their drive. But they generally aren't accountants, and as a result they are often unaware of just how important actively managing business credit is to their success."



Success in business means, paying attention to every aspect of your business operation, which includes administration.

Many new start-ups cannot afford to hire staff to take care of the necessary administrative functions. However, with the right tools you can manage these functions easily. Following are some basic tools necessary to runs a successful business.

- ❖ A Designated Workspace
- ❖ A Computer
- ❖ A Printer
- ❖ Microsoft Office
- ❖ QuickBooks
- ❖ An Accountant

If you would like advice on any of these tools give us a call and we'll be glad to help!

#### Contact Us

FWBCC  
1832 E. Paulding Rd.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46816  
260.441.0100

[www.FortWayneBlackChamber.org](http://www.FortWayneBlackChamber.org)

[facebook.com/fortwayneblackchamber](https://facebook.com/fortwayneblackchamber)

*As we say goodbye to 2017 and enter 2018, a new year of opportunities, be intentional about the success of your business!*



## Save the Date – Networking for Success

Networking - to interact with other people to exchange information and develop contacts, especially to further one's career.

You now will have an opportunity to meet with other like-minded "go getters" like yourself to exchange information, develop new contacts, and encourage each other

on this journey to independence and personal wealth building.

To be the best that we can be, we must be well informed on many topics and many levels, so please plan to join us to hear our dynamic speaker of the month, **Eric Doden, CEO with Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.**

Time: 6-8pm  
Date: Thursday, January 11, 2018  
Place: @ The Chamber  
Speaker: Eric Doden

Topic: Small Business Development

Refreshments will be served.



## African American Buying Power

As I was writing this article, I remembered a study that looked at the buying power of African American consumers and the question that was asked, was, how long does a dollar circulate in the black community? The astonishing answer is 6 hours. Our buying power as a community stands at \$1.1 Trillion. And the next question is, how much of that \$1.1 Trillion is invested, reinvested, or spent with black owned businesses? The answer is dismal, 2% or 2 cents of every dollar.

Imagine for a moment, with this much wealth generated by African Americans what would our communities look like if we spent our own money in our own communities? How many of our youth could we hire? What could we do to increase homeownership and stabilize neighborhoods in our communities. What would it mean to our black businesses, if we supported them more? What quality of schools would we have? And on and on and on...

As you think about 2018, and what you want to accomplish and what will be your legacy, let each of us commit to doing better and being better in 2018 than we were in 2017 by supporting each other, and keeping as much of that \$1.1 Trillion in our community. To help you in your personal efforts to support, here are just a few of our competent black businesses that would welcome your support.

LegacyOne Real Estate  
Contact: Linda Golden  
Phone: 260.494.0368

Copeland Contracting (Plumbing)  
Contact: Greg Copeland  
Phone: 260.410.7737

Anderson Heating & AC  
Contact: JR Anderson  
Phone: 260.557.0958

JKW Hair Studio  
Contact: Jozet Kincaid  
Phone: 260.348.5101

The Preston Joan Group (Business Consultant)  
Contact: John Dortch  
Phone: 260.437.6596

Afortus Financial Insurance Services  
Contact: Cozey Baker  
Phone: 260.417.2109

Lapsley, Inc. (Window Treatments)  
Contact: Donita Mudd  
Phone: 260.745.3265

C2IT Advisors (IT Consulting)  
Contact: Clifford Clarke  
Phone: 260.403.5855

# Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce



## How You Can Become a Member of the

Businesses and individuals are members because they take pride in their membership and want to be part of an organization that plays a key role in our Fort Wayne community. The climate for small businesses is primed and ready for your business success.

### Benefits of Membership

- Networking
- Education and advocacy
- Referrals and sales opportunities
- Business workshops and seminars
- Information and resource
- Much more

### Membership Costs

\$100
Individual
\$200
Businesses up to 50 employees
\$500
Businesses 50+ employees

## Thank You!!

**The Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce thanks our 2017 Partners for your support of our mission.**

3 Rivers Federal Credit Union  
Fire Police City County FCU  
Fort Financial Credit Union  
Midwest American FCU  
Partner 1<sup>st</sup> Federal Credit Union  
ProFed Federal Credit Union

## How You Can Be Involved

To ensure smooth continuation of its operations, the FWBCC has established several committees some of which community volunteers are needed for the following committees.

- Programs/Business Development & Training
- Communications and Marketing Committee
- Fundraising Committee

Visit our Facebook page or website if you are interested in serving on a committee.

FORT WAYNE BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
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FORT WAYNE, IN 46816