

# Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce



## Board of Directors

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Secretary  
Ralph Anderson  
Don Cates  
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Paul Hardy  
Leroy Jackson Jr.  
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John Dortch,  
President/CEO  
Cozey Baker, CFO

## From the Desk of the President...

The Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce is experiencing a rebirth. I am honored to be trusted by the board as president.

We are meeting regularly on the third Tuesday of the month, 6 PM at the chamber building 1832 E. Paulding Rd.

We have been busy. We added new board members, updated our web and social media sites with fresh information, and are planning an annual

calendar. We are planning networking and training opportunities to begin in October.

You can help us develop a strong Black chamber by becoming a sponsor or member, attending a training or networking event, and by patronizing one of our member business.

Our time is now and there is a lot to get done. Join us.

## Mission

The mission of the Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce is to promote, encourage, and provide programs and services which will contribute to economic development and growth of African American businesses throughout the Allen County area. We will advocate policies, establish coalitions which will improve business opportunities for African Americans and help in the growth of a diverse and prosperous economy.

## How to Start a Business 101

If you are starting a business or if you are already in business can be a risky proposition. The Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce will be offering a Mini Series Entrepreneurial Workshop beginning in October 2017.

This workshop is intended to help guide you through the assessment process and introduce you to the tools you will need to start, and grow your business.

After attending this workshop, you should be better prepared to:

- Determine if you have the traits necessary to be a business owner
- Identify your strengths and weaknesses, and how they fit with business ownership

our instructor will be John P. Dortch, President/CEO of The Preston Joan Group, Inc., and President/CEO of The

Penta C.S. Group, LLC and, President of The Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce.

More detailed information will be available soon. Please check in often on our Facebook page



## 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

## BUILD Class # 4 Graduates

BUILD is a 4-week pre-apprenticeship training program, training individuals for success in the construction trades.

BUILD has recently graduated its 4<sup>th</sup> class, with 100% graduation rate. To date 57 men and women have entered the program and all 57 have completed.

We are proud of every individual who has participated and we are ready and gearing up for class number 5.

### What Can BUILD Do For You?

- Help you find a career
- Help you determine what trade fit your personal skill set
- Offer you training by experienced professionals
- Make sure you have the necessary support as you transition into your new chosen profession
- Offer a weekly stipend while you are a fully engaged class participant



### 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)

## Networking for Success

Networking, 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 first dynamic speaker, Michelle Chambers.

Light refreshments will be served.

Time: 6-8 pm  
Date: Thursday, November 9, 2017  
Place: @ The Chamber  
Speaker: Michelle Chambers

Topic: Politics and the Political process in Fort Wayne



## Excerpts From *5 Tips to Re-focus and Re-brand Your Business* Black Enterprise, Wealth for Life. Alan Hughes, May 1, 2012

**Identify who you are.** "We went through an extensive re-branding exercise. That I think for us, not only was it a fresh look and feel and name of our organization that matched our broadened services, but it also really challenged us to kind of identify who we are," says O'Dell. He suggests asking, "What is our mission and what are we trying to accomplish?"

**Define your goals.** For O'Dell and his team it was determining whether their audience came to the capital for sports, entertainment, conventions or meetings. "You need to know what that target audience is and although it sounds simple or cliché, we really did have to spend a lot of time on focusing on that so I think you know the re-branding was clearly one strategic task we took."

**Look to expand your portfolio.** For Events DC, which owns and operates [Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium](#) and the surrounding Festival Grounds, and the non-military functions of the [DC Armory](#), this was done via a strategic acquisition – [Carnegie Library](#). "It's a beautiful, historic library and we strategically wanted to move kind of our services beyond just our own venues," he says. "So we really did focus on broadening our services beyond just traditional host venues."

**Forge strategic partnerships.** "We know that our goal is to drive visitors to the city so that they can spend more dollars in the city and it's not always limited to those who come rent from our facilities," says O'Dell. "We actually have strategic partnerships with organizations that put on large events or attract events, like the [National Cherry Blossom Festival](#). That in itself drives about \$100 million dollars in economic impact for the city."

**Create demand.** "I would call it the Living Social model. What's interesting about them is they have people bidding on packages or getting discounts to go to Topeka, Kansas and stay in a hotel, but they are creating demand so people perceive a discount are going to somewhere they'd never would have gone," says O'Dell. "So for us, we don't want to sit back and just wait for customers to come to our venues, we actually now are trying to create an event. And the greatest example of that would be the [AT&T Nation's Football Classic](#), which had almost three and a half million dollars in economic impact for the city in its first year."



## How You Can Become a Member of the FWBCC

Businesses and individuals become members because they take great pride in their membership and are proud to be part of an organization that plays a key role in the community.

### 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+	

## About Our Organization...

**The Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce** serves as an advocate for the creation, growth and general welfare of black businesses in Fort Wayne. The Chamber will promote the expansion of business opportunities on behalf of its membership through referrals, partnerships, seminars, technical assistance, and mentoring.

The Chamber's primary focus is on economic and business development, education and special projects, and your membership is a key component for success.

## How You Can Be Involved

To ensure smooth continuation of its operations, the FWBCC has established a number of 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.

FWBCC  
1832 E. PAULDING ROAD  
FORT WAYNE, IN 46816

COMMUNITY MEMBER  
RECIPIENT