

Reaching Our Potential

The Greater Baltimore Committee's Bridging the Gap Initiative continues to be an integral part of minority and women-owned business development in the region. This year has been especially challenging for the Minority and Women Business Enterprises (MWBEs) businesses that we serve, many of which are experiencing the effects of the recession.



for Entrepreneurship," Dr. Robert Wallace talks about his path to business ownership and offers advice on weathering the recession. "Practical Steps to Surviving a Recession," provides suggestions for cutting costs without sacrificing the business strategy.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) firmly believes that in order for the region's business community to reach its full potential, all members of the business community must be prosperous. Towards this end, the GBC has recently formed the Minority and Women Business Inclusion Committee. The committee will provide an avenue for businesses to use the resources of the GBC to develop solutions to their most pressing needs.

Recessions are difficult on businesses but, though counterintuitive, they can present unique opportunities. For instance, large corporations are now forced to review their procurement contracts to ensure that they are getting the best value for their dollar. This has at least a couple of implications for MWBEs.

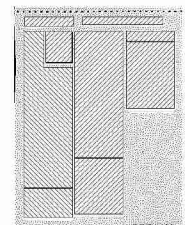
It means that many of those seemingly impenetrable contracts may now be up for bid. It also means that MWBE firms must ensure that they are never viewed as expendable to their clients. It requires working on every project as if it is the most important project of your career.

This special publication will feature practical advice from a variety of sources, including other business owners with firsthand experience. In "Pain Imbalance - Motivation

This year, the Bridging the Gap Initiative was named a finalist in the Best Small Business Project category of World Chambers Competition 2009. The competition is a program of the International Chamber of Commerce, headquartered in Paris, France.

The GBC was one of four finalists in the category. Other finalists were the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce, the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the National Chamber of Commerce of Sri Lanka.

Kisha Lashley, the director of the Bridging the Gap Initiative, travelled to Malaysia to represent the



GBC. Because of our success, the Bridging the Gap minority business development initiative was featured in BusinessWeek magazine.

Bridging the Gap continues to make the business case for supplier diversity. We continue to engage corporate executives in recognizing the local minority and women-owned business talent and partnering with local MWBE firms. We are confident that our continuing efforts will effectively meet our expanding objectives for strengthening minority and women-owned business success in the Baltimore region.

We have additional programs scheduled before the end of the year. Be sure to attend our Healthcare Vendor Fair and our Green Business Symposium.

Thank you for participating in the 6th Annual Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards and we look forward to your continued support.



Donald C. Fry
President & CEO
Greater Baltimore Committee