

FROM THE PRESIDENT..

"To whom much is given...Much is expected"

As we enter the 2002 election season, the African American business community must ask itself two clear questions... "What's in it for us?"... and "Who will best deliver it?". Traditionally, the African American community has been the most loyal community to the Democratic Party. We have given much. We must insist on having clear answers before the 2002 (not 2019) election. We must evaluate how our expectations have been met and if our friends have been as loyal to us as we have been to them.

Recently, Governor Pataki appointed me to the NYS Freedom Trail Commission. I made the request to join the commission as a result of understanding the positive impact both counties will experience with a flourishing trail. African American businesspersons should be full participants in the development (economics) of the trail. We should not wait to be the annual dinner's honorees, while others concentrate on the profits.

Clearly, if 911 taught us anything about the economy of New York it's --- tourism is the life blood of New York; and the lack of a flourishing tourist season can and will devastate the economic condition of families throughout the state.

During this election year, African Americans must evaluate the new civil rights agenda (the economic agenda) and understand the benefits of our participation. We must acknowledge the changing dynamics of the population and how Rockland and Westchester will look in the year 2019. Individuals looking for our participation (VOTE) in the 2002 election must be able to answer questions pertaining to how they will impact our lives in the year 2003. But, if there is no clear answer -- we must smile that smile, be polite and move right along. Because... "To Whom Much Is Given...Much Is Expected."

Sincerely,
Robin L. Douglas
President/CEO/Founder

MBDA EQUITY CAPITAL ACCESS PROGRAM (MECA)

MBDA launches its first ever initiative to give minority entrepreneurs greater access to Equity Capital. The U.S. Commerce Department's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) and the Emerging Venture Network (EVN) has launched the **MBDA Equity Capital Access (MECA) Program**, marking a landmark expansion of MBDA's commitment to respond to minority entrepreneur's need for greater access to equity capital.

Minority businesses only receive 2% of all private equity investments. MECA will further the Bush Administration's commitment to empower minority entrepreneurs with the training and tools they need to be successful in today's economy.

The **MECA Program** is one of the first to offer minority entrepreneurs equity capital training of this kind at a national level. The program's first major project will be a business plan competition organized through the five MBDA regional offices. MBDA and EVN will identify up to 200 entrepreneurs to assess and give a scored evaluation with written comments on strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. Of those 200 entrepreneurs, 25 will be selected to participate in an intensive training session, or "boot camp" where selected applicants will be drilled in the fundamentals of obtaining venture capital. The boot camp will take place in Washington, D.C. on September 24-27, 2002. Five of the 25 selected businesses will present their concepts at MED Week to a panel of venture capital experts for feedback and coaching. The deadline for online applications is: Friday, August 2, 2002 and may be submitted to <http://www.evn.org/>. (For information on the MED Week Conference, visit www.medweek.gov.)

The **MECA Program** will stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit of the minority community by delivering tools that will lead to enduring prosperity by opening more doors to capitalism and opportunity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT.....	1
MBDA EQUITY CAPITAL ACCESS PROGRAM.....	1
WESTCHESTER COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY.....	2
HUDSDON VALLEY PREP.....	2
JUNETEENTH 2002 UPDATE.....	2
NEW YORK STATE FREEDOM TRAIL.....	2
PHOTO-OPS and SAVE THE DATE(S)	3,4

For meeting and event information call: (914) 699-4749

UP AND COMING !! 2002 !!!

WESTCHESTER COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Westchester County has created a new program initiative offered through the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency, offering financial incentives to small businesses.

Any company that invests more than \$100,000 in new equipment, furnishings or fixtures can now apply for thousands of dollars in sales and use tax exemptions. That means the overall cost of upgrading an office or facility would be significantly reduced.

Larger corporations have often received these incentives, but this is the first time such benefits are being offered to smaller companies. It's the County's way of acknowledging how important small businesses are to the Westchester economy. (90% of the county's 34,000 firms employ less than 20 people).

To qualify for benefits, a business must spend between \$100,000 and \$1 million on new equipment, furnishings or fixtures. The savings can be substantial - up to \$60,000. The need for the purchases can either stem from growth or the desire to modernize to stay competitive.

The program has been made possible because the Agency has standardized its application process and reduced the origination and legal fees that typically go with an IDA straight lease project.

For more information, call (914) 995-2916 or e-mail: ida1@westchester.com. To learn more about other available economic development resources, visit our website at www.westchestergov.com.

HUDSON VALLEY PREP with the MTA

The Chamber has forged a relationship with the MTA and Westchester Community College (WCC). In the Fall, the Chamber, WCC and the MTA will host a number of how-to-do business workshops for the business community, entitled the "Hudson Valley PREP". The program is a "Learning How To Procure MTA And Govt. Contracts Through PREP" training course for entrepreneurs in the area.

The PREP program is a 32-hour workshop that helps disadvantaged-minority-and women-owned businesses learn how to compete successfully for contracting opportunities with MTA and other government agencies. The program has historically had 76% of its participants obtain contracts with the MTA. The Fall program will begin Saturday, November 2nd and run through November 23rd.

For more detail or a brochure, call the Chamber at 914-699-4749.

Classes begin November 2nd for the Fall session and May 10th for the Spring.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION 2002

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION 2002 kicked-off with an Opening Reception at Yvonne's Restaurant in Pelham, NY. Guest dined on a sumptuous buffet and were entertained by the Reggie Woods Band. The Reception was attended by Mount Vernon Mayor Ernest D. Davis; Westchester County Clerk Reginald Lafayette; Mount Vernon City Clerk Lisa Copeland; John Butler from Verizon; and representatives from the Journal News.

The Diversity Job Fair at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, White Plains, NY was a success with over 15 vendors and 900 participants attending.

The Business-to-Business Luncheon at the Hilton Rye Town was well received. Keynote Speaker Mr. Robert L. Johnson (Chairman/Founder BET) was the highlight of the event.

Mr. Johnson spoke of the need in taking risks. A former lobbyist with the cable industry, Johnson reasoned there were business opportunities for those who were willing to market to black audiences that were being neglected by white corporations. With a \$500,000 check from John Malone, BET was started. Johnson said "the first risk you have to take is believing in yourself. "If I can do it, there are a lot of other people in this room that can do it also." He noted that more blacks are going to school, owning their own homes, and buying stock than ever before in American history. "It means African Americans are beginning to take their rightful place with the wealth engine of this country, he said. "We've got to make sure everybody is participating in the benefits of that economy."

One way of doing this is by networking through organizations such as the Chamber. He urged the audience to do more to keep the Chamber from foundering. "As African Americans, we should never let something like this happen to us," he said. "We should do for ourselves."

NEW YORK STATE FREEDOM TRAIL

Pursuant to Section 233-B-C of the Education Law, Robin L. Douglas was appointed to the New York State Freedom Trail Commission by Governor George E. Pataki on July 29, 2002. The term will expire in 2006.

Robin L. Douglas is the President/CEO/Founder of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Westchester and Rockland Counties, Inc. (Chamber), established June 28, 1996.

The Chamber was established as an independent not-for-profit agency to assist, counsel and protect the interest of the African American Business concerns. Our mission is to preserve enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of Westchester and Rockland Counties.

2002 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNETEENTH 2002

(photo-op)



Business-to-Business Luncheon (L-R) Leon, Robin Douglas, Robert L. Johnson pose as the Chamber presents Mr. Johnson with a thank you plaque. Mr. Johnson reciprocated with a \$10,000 contribution to the Chamber.



(6/18/02) **Entrepreneur's Breakfast** (l-r) Robin L. Douglas, Hon. Andrew J. Spano, Westchester executives address business leaders.



(6/18/02) **IDA Director, Sal Carrera** - explains counties goals and objectives to business leaders.

2002 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER...

- * **Congressional Black Caucus** - Washington, D.C. Sept. 11th thru 14th.
- * **MED Week 2002** - Washington, D.C. - Sept. 24th thru 27th
For more information call 1-877-Medweek

OCTOBER...

- * **6TH ANNUAL AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP DINNER** - Thursday, October 17th at the HILTON RYE TOWN, Ryebrook, NY

NOVEMBER...

- * **MTA/Hudson Valley Prep Course** - begins Nov. 2nd at WCC.

DECEMBER...

- * **9TH CommunitH Holiday Party** - Renaissance Hotel, White Plains, NY 6-8pm.

AAAB HEALTH SUMMIT

The Health Committee of the African American Advisory Board in collaboration with the American Cancer Society is sponsoring a Health Summit on September 26, 2002 at Manhattanville College.

If you are interested in attending or just to provide information please contact Dierdra Gray at (914) 995-2946 or dag4@westchestergov.com.

CHECK OUT !! THE CHAMBER'S NEWLY DESIGNED WEBSITE

WWW.AFRICANAMERICANCHAMBEROFCOMMERCEINYS.ORG
Designed by Chamber member
Technology Users Interface, Inc., Ossining, NY

E-MAIL US WITH YOUR COMMENTS @
RLDOUGLAS@COMPUSERVE.COM

100 Stevens Ave, Ste. 202, Mount Vernon, NY 10550
914-699-9050

THE ENTREPRENEUR - will be published in November and January 2003.
If you have any questions about the Chamber (membership, upcoming events, and submitting articles) or for placing advertising, please contact:

THE ENTREPRENEUR
The AACWR, Inc.,

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www.africanamericanchamberofcommercenys.org

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IN THIS ISSUE.. EQUITY CAPITAL CAPITAL !!!!

THE ENTREPRENEUR...
*Newsletter Advertising Contract
March Issue of the Entrepreneur*

Please insert our advertisement into the AACCW's Winter issue of the Entrepreneur.

(All contributions are tax deductible to the extent of the law)

NAME: _____

COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NO.: _____

FAX NO.: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Payment and camera-ready copy are due by **October 31, 2002**
(We will not be able to accommodate requests received after this date)

I/We hereby contribute \$_____ for a business card page ad in the AACCW Inc's Newsletter.

Please make checks payable to: African American Chamber of Commerce of Westchester and Rockland Counties, Inc. (AACCW, INC.)

Mail to: African American Chamber of Commerce of Westchester & Rockland Counties, Inc. (AACCW, Inc.) * 100 Stevens Avenue Suite 202 * Mount Vernon, NY 10550

The African American Chamber of Commerce of Westchester and Rockland Counties, Inc.

Cordially invites you to attend the

*SIXTH ANNUAL
AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIP DINNER*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2002

AT THE

HILTON RYE TOWN
RYEBROOK, NY

NATIONAL BUSINESSPERSON OF THE YEAR
MR. RODNEY J. REYNOLDS
Publisher of American Legacy Magazine

COCKTAIL RECEPTION 6:00PM

AWARDS AND DINNER 7:00PM UNTIL 11:00PM

BUSINESS ATTIRE

Awards by: the Mount Vernon Fine Art Gallery
All attendees will receive a one-year paid subscription of
Black Enterprise Magazine

Directions: www.mapquest.com