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Achievement Awards
BRIDGING THE GAP
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The Baltimore Times
This special publication highlights the achievements of minority and women-owned businesses in the greater Baltimore region. I hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments of the entrepreneurs profiled here and the drive with which they pursue their business visions.

The businesses featured here are winners of the Greater Baltimore Committee’s 2011 Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards. They are representative of the many highly-driven, successful entrepreneurs in the Baltimore region and state who exemplify the kind of private-sector achievement that drives our economy.

As Maryland’s economy emerges from a tenacious and sluggish recession, the strength, innovation and resolve demonstrated by minority and women-owned businesses serve to inspire us. The noteworthy companies featured inside have achieved success across a wide spectrum of industries. Amid great challenges, these companies thrive.

Also featured are majority-owned companies that have developed strong business relationships with minority and woman-owned firms and have strengthened their combined business competitiveness as a result.

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. The GBC firmly believes that in order for the region’s economy to reach its full potential, all members of its business community must be fully engaged. The GBC looks forward to continuing to build upon the strong foundation we have laid, and expanding and deepening our collaborative efforts to the benefit of all involved.

To further cultivate the growth of minority-owned and women-owned businesses, the GBC will continue to sponsor professional development and networking events, like our annual health care vendor fair; extol the benefits of supplier diversity and continue to promote strategic alliances as a means of meeting the many challenges all businesses face.

We celebrate the successes of the companies featured here and look forward to the success stories that are yet to be. We welcome your interest and involvement in the Bridging the Gap program and we look forward to continuing support for strengthening business opportunity for all in Baltimore and Maryland.

President & CEO
Greater Baltimore Committee
MedStar Health is proud to be a sponsor of the

Greater Baltimore Committee’s 8th Annual Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards

and applauds their commitment to strengthening minority and women-owned businesses in the region.
Strengthening Minority and Women-Owned Business

Bridging the Gap is an initiative of the Greater Baltimore Committee, designed to advance the business culture of greater Baltimore by fostering an atmosphere in which majority and minority and women-owned businesses can form mutually beneficial strategic partnerships. The initiative strives to provide businesses with the necessary tools and support to develop such collaborations.

The goals of the initiative are to:

- **Nurture the creation of legacy wealth** among minority and women-owned businesses (MWBEs) by broadening business prospects that are available to them.

- **Communicate the business case for minority inclusion** and development to the region’s larger business community.

- **Provide training opportunities** that enhance capabilities within the minority and women-owned business community to enable successful participation in partnership opportunities.

Bridging the Gap is one of the GBC’s top priorities. The Bridging the Gap initiative relates directly to the GBC’s mission of improving the business climate of the Greater Baltimore region by organizing its corporate and civic leadership to develop solutions to the problems that affect the region’s competitiveness and viability. The region’s competitiveness would receive a significant boost if full participation of MWBEs in the regional economy were achieved. A study conducted by the Sage Policy Group found that fully engaging MWBEs in the region’s economy would generate as much as $5 billion of additional sales revenue and 32,000 new jobs.
At a ceremony that took place on November 17, 2011, winners of the Greater Baltimore Committee Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards were announced. The awards recognize outstanding minority-owned and women-owned firms as well as majority businesses and executives for their efforts to nurture the development of minority businesses in the Baltimore region.

Awards were presented in four categories: successful minority businesses that deserve recognition for outstanding achievement; corporations or individual business executives that have shown leadership in the area of inclusive business practices; partnerships or strategic alliances that generate new business opportunities for minority-owned or women-owned firms; and a president’s award.

Awardees included:

**Minority or Women-Owned Enterprises**

**Audacious Inquiry**  
This minority-owned innovative management and technology consulting firm specializes in health care information systems. Since its founding in 2004, the Catonsville-based company has grown to 22 employees, 73 percent of whom are women or minorities. Audacious Inquiry’s revenue growth has earned it a place on Inc. Magazine’s 5,000 fastest-growing private companies in the U.S. It is among the first Maryland firms to earn B Corporation certification for using the power of business to solve social and environmental problems.

**Beacon Associates, Inc.**  
In less than 10 years, Beacon Associates founder Carol Koffinke has achieved success in the male-dominated federal contracting sector. She has grown this Bel Air-based organizational development and performance consultant firm from a one-woman shop into a 200-employee company that has served more than a dozen federal agencies and clients in numerous commercial and nonprofit industry sectors. The firm is among the Wall Street Journal’s top 20 fastest growing woman-led firms in North America.

**BEMO Corporation**  
With little more than $1,000 in his pocket, a computer, a vision, and solid knowledge of the energy industry, James A. Brown launched his BEMO energy services firm in Baltimore less than two years ago. Seizing opportunity amid a “Green Revolution,” BEMO performs home energy checks for BGE customers, delivering energy-saving value to customers and to BGE. In its second year, BEMO’s 25 employees are servicing $2 million in BGE contracts and seek to expand their services to other utilities in support of Empower Maryland.

Minority and women entrepreneurs provide lessons in seizing opportunity

Looking for some inspiration in a flat economy? You don’t have to search far to find minority and women entrepreneurs who recognized opportunities, seized them, and built businesses around them.
C. Jones Trucking LLC
Under the leadership of CEO Norman “Reggie” Anderson, C. Jones Trucking has grown in a challenging economy by offering a broad range of services including trucking, project management, construction management and asphalt manufacturing. It currently is Maryland’s only MBE-certified asphalt manufacturer. The 25-employee Aberdeen-based firm partners with major minority-owned contractors to pursue new business opportunities. It received a 2011 Contractor of the Year Award from the Maryland Washington Minority Contractors’ Association.

Harris-Kupfer Architects
Armed with a master’s degree in architecture from Morgan State University and eight years of experience working at architectural firms in Baltimore, Leslie Harris founded Harris-Kupfer in 2004. She has been the driving force behind the firm’s success in providing full architectural service to a variety of clients and specializing in health care architecture to clients including the University of Maryland Medical system. The Baltimore-based firm is adept at integrating budget consciousness and green elements into designs for assisted living facilities.

Integrity Title & Escrow Company
After 14 years in the real estate title industry, Shina Parker took a leap of faith when she and her business partner, Monzella Owings, founded Integrity Title & Escrow company 12 years ago. The Owings Mills-based firm has since grown into one of Maryland’s leading title firms and the top-ranked woman-owned title company in the state. The firm, which is characterized by dedicated professional development, boasts a seasoned and highly service-oriented team of lawyers and real estate experts.

Majority-Owned Business
University of Maryland Medical System
UMMS has emerged as an industry leader in developing a successful, comprehensive, and strategic approach to furthering the expansion of minority and women-owned business opportunities with the hospital system. A board-level committee addresses and monitors the medical system’s commitment to creating an infrastructure to promote and support MWBE business development and participation in system operations. UMMS is aggressively pursuing a multi-faceted approach, including a program that generated between 27 percent and 42 percent MWBE participation in major construction projects, and a supplier diversity effort that increased supply purchases from MBWE firms from $20 million in FY 2010 to $31 million in 2011.

Key Partnership or Strategic Alliance
The Cordish Companies and Commercial Interiors
The Cordish Companies and its CEO, David Cordish, have distinguished themselves in Maryland’s minority business community by consistently demonstrating a strong commitment to minority participation on projects that have MBE goals, as well as projects that don’t. In both instances, Cordish has made minority-owned Commercial Interiors, based in Hanover, Maryland, a valued construction management partner on high-profile projects.

In 2010, Cordish selected Commercial Interiors, led by Kevin Johnson, president, to complete a $1.1 million private project with no MBE mandates – Dick’s Last Resort in Baltimore’s Power Plant Live! Cordish also turned to Commercial Interiors as its lead joint venture partner to build the $250 million Maryland Live! Casino. The high-profile project, which broke ground last January, is expected to award $95 million

Congratulations to our 2011 winners. All are examples of what entrepreneurial vision and drive can accomplish in any economy.

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The Economic Impact of Maryland’s Minority Business Enterprise Program

Think that Maryland’s MBE Program only benefits minorities? Think again.

Maryland’s Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program has bolstered the size of Maryland’s economy by $1.7 billion and provided support for more than 19,000 jobs, according to the Maryland Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs 2009 Economic Impact of Maryland’s MBE Program report.

The MBE Program supports the State’s economic development goals of job creation, expanded industry and increased tax revenues.

Maryland MBE procurement spending exceeded more than $1.1 billion in fiscal year 2010.

The economic impact of the program also amounted to $631.8 million in wages and salaries, and about $41.5 million in State and local tax revenues.
ACHIEVEMENT: LEADING BY EXAMPLE

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in construction work to minority businesses – 3 percent more than the state’s MWBE goal of 35 percent. So far, 40 minority-owned or women-owned businesses have been awarded contracts for this major casino project. The Cordish Companies and Commercial Interiors, and David Cordish and Kevin Johnson together have demonstrated the high value and positive impact on minority business development to be derived through partnerships between majority-owned and minority-owned companies.

**President’s Award**

**Stanley Tucker, president & CEO, Meridian Management Group**

For more than 30 years, Stanley Tucker has been on the front lines of minority business development, helping minority entrepreneurs overcome one of their greatest obstacles – gaining access to capital to allow them to pursue their business visions.

For the past 16 years, as president of Meridian Management Group, Tucker has provided professional asset management and financing services to small and emerging minority-owned firms in Maryland. His firm offers a comprehensive set of financing and strategic services options to help small firms grow to their next level of development.

“In order for Maryland’s business community to reach its full potential, all businesses must be engaged and thriving,” says GBC President & CEO Donald C. Fry, “These motivated, successful minority and women entrepreneurs and partners exemplify the kind of private-sector achievement that drives our economy.”

Tucker has been a visible, passionate, and highly committed advocate for advancing opportunities and resources for minority-owned businesses since 1980, when he became executive director of the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority (MSBDFA), a state agency charged with providing financing – including bonding, contract financing, and working capital – to a wide range of small and minority-owned firms.

Today, MSBDFA remains among Meridian’s portfolio of financing options available to its small business clients.

Over the decades, Tucker has provided access to capital, invaluable consultation, and advocacy for hundreds of small, minority and women-owned firms. His advocacy on behalf of minority-owned business development is legendary. He has converted his low-key, easy-going personality, strategic approach, and high integrity into opportunities for individual entrepreneurs and, along the way, has moved agendas and forged winning strategies in the area of MBE policy development.

“Stan makes it a point to mentor others, whether they are aspiring entrepreneurs or MBE practitioners,” says Luwanda Jenkins, special secretary for the Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs. “I can think of few people who have been on the front lines fighting for, and scoring gains for, minority businesses for as long as Stanley Tucker.”

**Finalists**

Winners of the 2011 Bridging the Gap Achievement Awards were selected from a group of finalists that included:

- Aegis Mechanical Corp.
- Allstate Floors & Construction, Inc.
- Amoorer, Inc.
- BithGroup
- Butler & Associates
- Cosmos Air Purification & Environmental Systems, Inc.
- Ekistics, LLC
- Intelect Corporation
- InterGroup Services
- K&K Adams, Inc.
- L&J Waste Recycling, LLC
- Laisar Management Group, LLC
- M. Luis Construction
- MyCity4Her
- Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineering
- Walker Benefit Services

Congratulations to our 2011 winners and finalists. All are examples of what entrepreneurial vision and drive can accomplish in any economy.
Resources for Minority Businesses

Regional

Bridging the Gap Initiative
Greater Baltimore Committee
111 S. Calvert Street, Suite 1700
Baltimore, MD 21202
410-727-2820
www.gbc.org

Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs
6 St. Paul Street, Suite 1502
Baltimore MD 21202
410-767-8232
www.mdminoritybusiness.com

Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076
800-544-6056
www.mdot.state.md.us/MBE_Program/Index.html

Mayor’s Office of Minority and Women Owned Businesses
City Hall, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
410-396-3818 / MOMBD@baltimorecity.gov
www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/minority

Business Development

Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development
Office of Business Services
410-767-0595
www.choosemaryland.org/startbusiness/pages/dbedbusinessservices.aspx

eMaryland Marketplace
Do business with the state of Maryland
www.marylandmarketplace.com

Linked Deposit Program
Maryland initiative to help MBEs by reducing interest rates on bank loans
www.mdhousing.org

Maryland Health Insurance Partnership
Health Insurance for Small Businesses
www.mbcc.maryland.gov/partnership

Useful Web Sites

Diversity Information Resources
www.diversityinforesources.com

FraserNet Community
www.frasernetcommunity.net

Minority Business Development Agency
www.mbdagov

Maryland/DC Minority Supplier Diversity Council
www.mddccouncil.org

Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
www.mdhcc.org

Maryland Procurement Technical Assistance Program
www.mdptap.umd.edu

Maryland Office of Minority Business Enterprise
www.marylandtransportation.com

Maryland Technology Enterprise Institute (MTECH)
Provides technical assistance to the industrial community
www.erc.umd.edu

National Black Chamber of Commerce
www.nationalbcc.org

SCORE
A source of free & confidential small business advice for entrepreneurs.
www.score.org

Small Business Training Network -- Small Business Administration
A virtual campus providing quality and targeted online training to meet the information needs of prospective and existing small business owners.
www.sba.gov/services/training/index.html

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Joy Bramble, Publisher
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Executives in Central Maryland join one organization to build business relationships, connect to corporate, civic, and political leaders, and to stay informed about business climate issues...the Greater Baltimore Committee.

To join: Liz Pettengill
410-727-2820
lisbethp@gbc.org

Upcoming Events
Dec. 5: Mayor’s Business Recognition Awards
Jan. 23, 2012: Md. General Assembly Legislative Forum
April 5, 2012: Lunch with the Orioles
May 15, 2012: Annual Meeting
June 7, 2012: Golf Classic

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