



CAAO Grapevine

Consortium of African American Organizations

Connie Atkins - Executive Director

April 22, 2002

Letter from the Executive Director of CAAO

"I'm so excited, I just can't hide it!!" There is something brewing in greater Cleveland and it is not just beer (smile). It is people helping people, people trusting people, and it is not just TALK.

I would like to welcome you to the Consortium of African American Organizations (CAAO). CAAO in partnership with Enterprise Development, Inc. and the generous funding of The Cleveland Foundation and the Gund Foundation is working collaboratively with the professional African American organizations of greater Cleveland to make things happen – to share best practices – to increase the flow of communications – to develop and aid entrepreneurs – to assist community leaders with their issues – to pass on job opportunities – to support each other – to connect the African American community to the resources available.

"Now, I will take a breath. That is a mouthful. I told you I was excited."



As a 20 year entrepreneur in greater Cleveland, I can truly appreciate the benefits of active collaboration and the wonderful positive domino effect. Please take a few minutes to explore our website (a work in progress) and give us your comments. Positive and negative feedback are quite welcome.

CAAO is here to serve YOU !!"

Connie Atkins, Executive Director

Consortium of African American Organizations

CAAO's Guiding Principles

EDUCATE the African American community about the importance of business growth, economic empowerment, and development;

PROMOTE the patronage of African American businesses;

INCREASE communication and cooperation between local African American entrepreneurial activities;

SERVE as a resource to support African American entrepreneurial activities; and

SUPPORT the activities of member organizations.

Current Member Organizations



1. African American Faculty and Staff of CWRU
2. Black Data Processing Associates
3. Black Professionals Association
4. Blacks in Government
5. Blacks in Management
6. CSU Black Alumni Organization
7. Cleveland Women's Council of National Association of Real Estate Brokers
8. Forest City Dental Society
9. National Assoc. of Black Accountants
10. National Black MBA Association
11. National Society of Black Engineers
12. National Technical Association
13. President's Council
14. Urban Financial Services Coalition

CAAO

MISSION STATEMENT

To utilize the resources of greater Cleveland African American professional organizations to promote economic development in African American communities and to enhance career and entrepreneurial opportunities for African Americans.

Cleveland Women's Council of NAREB Offers Special Loan Program for Single Women who Head Households

(April 19, 2002) The Cleveland Women's Council of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) and Third Federal Savings and Loan have teamed up to help single head of household women buy homes in Cuyahoga County.

Applicants in the new program, called Head Home, work with Realtist members of the Cleveland Women's Council to complete the steps necessary to obtaining a loan. They first enroll in a seminar sponsored by ReSolve, Inc., a credit management agency, that teaches successful budgeting and home buying. Participants who successfully complete the seminar are eligible for a Third Federal mortgage loan. Women in the Head Home program may also be eligible for grant money from their churches, non-profit organizations or housing agencies.



According to Sharron Murphy-Williams, President of ReSolve, Inc., and the Cleveland Women's Council, the program is a first of a kind to be specifically designed to help single women purchase homes. "Statistics show that these women make up more than 45

percent of the families in the City of Cleveland, but they are among the lowest percentage of homeowners. We believe that our 'women working with women' program can help us to change those statistics."

Charles Thigpen, senior vice president of Third Federal's Community Development Services Department, added, "We see this program as a natural extension of our Neighborhood Investment Program, where we try to provide the education many families need to become successful homeowners. We look forward to participating in this pioneering program."

For complete guidelines on the program, please call (216) 371-3727.

Contact: Monica Martines: (216) 441-7346 ---Phone
(216) 441-5034 --- Fax

“CAAO Entrepreneur of the Month”

Story by Marcia Pledger



Quelina M. Jordan is no stranger to change. The business owner and computer consultant has lived in five cities and two countries within the last nine years. But she credits CAAO with helping her to adjust to her move back home to Cleveland last year with her two-year-old daughter, Briana. Jordan left Cleveland 11 years ago to obtain her bachelors degree in mathematics from Central State University and has never worked professionally in Cleveland until now.

“Through CAAO I met key black professionals and business owners,” said Jordan, 31. “They were very helpful. In other cities I had to actually search online for groups and connections.”

A month after moving to Cleveland, Jordan was named entrepreneur of the year by the Washington, D.C. chapter of the National Black MBA Association. “I was excited about the award and pleased that CAAO highlighted it at their networking function in December,” she said. “CAAO supports and acknowledges member’s success.”

The organization even awarded her firm, Centralian Consulting Services (<http://www.centralian.com>), a contract to design CAAO.net. The Website will be launched late April. Jordan founded Centralian Consulting in 1997 while working on her MBA at American University in Washington, D.C. Today the company primarily works with small businesses and organizations in efforts to get them online. Centralian offers several services including Internet strategy, Website design and maintenance.

Prior to launching her business, Jordan worked in various information management positions for the federal government in Chicago, Denver, Knoxville/Oak Ridge, and Washington, D.C. She also worked for the U.S. Department of State in Ghana three years ago.

“Those experiences gave me an opportunity to obtain skills in project management, operations and performance measurement,” she said. “Now I use that experience to help small businesses compete on the Web.” “I serve as a resource for small businesses that don’t have in-house IT talent,” she said.

When Jordan is not running her business or tending to her daughter, she enjoys watching sports and reconnecting with family. She is also a member of New Life Community Church of God in Maple Heights.

“Besides CAAO, Jordan is an active member of the National Technical Association, National Black MBA Association, and Black Geeks Online”. She is a financial member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the National Association of Female Executives.

But of all of the organizations that she’s involved in, CAAO has been the most supportive for her in this stage of her business.

“CAAO’s entrepreneurial empowerment circle is simply a Godsend,” she said. “We help grow each other’s business.”

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!!!!

The purpose of the volunteer database is to collect skill based information on individuals who would like to volunteer time to assist CAAO or one of its member organizations. CAAO's member organizations include:

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2. Black Data Processing Associates
3. Black Professionals Association
4. Blacks in Government
5. Blacks in Management
6. CSU Black Alumni Organization
7. Cleveland Women's Council of National Association of Real Estate Brokers
8. Forest City Dental Society
9. National Assoc. of Black Accountants
10. National Black MBA Association
11. National Society of Black Engineers
12. National Technical Association
13. President's Council
14. Urban Financial Services Coalition

If you are interested in volunteering time to CAAO or one of its member organizations, please contact William Holdip at caao_cleveland@yahoo.com



Urban Financial Services Coalition presents Annual Scholarship Event

We are very pleased with the success of our scholarship program. On January 7, 1998 the Urban Bankers Alliance of Greater Cleveland hosted a Scholarship Reception with the Cleveland Scholarship Program. Ruben Holloway, Executive Vice President of Keybank and Trustee of the Cleveland Scholarship Program was keynote speaker. Two \$500 scholarships were given. On December 10, 1999 UBAGC held its Annual Scholarship Luncheon at the Marriott at Key Center. The Keynote Speaker was Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones of Ohio's 11th District, who serves on the US House of Representatives Banking and Small Business Committees. Four \$500.00 scholarships were awarded. Over 100 bankers, business and civic leaders were in attendance. On July 19, 2001 the annual Jerome G. McClain scholarship luncheon was held at the Marroitt at Key Center with nearly 200 in attendance. The keynote speaker was George Fraser, author of Success Guide and nine \$1,000.00 scholarships was awarded.

This year we are holding a reception for scholarship recipients, since we are hosting the 2002 central regional conference in Cleveland in October. The reception will be held at The City Club, Thursday, July 25, 2002, from 5:30 P.M until 7:30 P.M. Guest speakers for the event will be Herb Smith, President & CEO of H C Smith LTD. and Deborah Sharpley-Lampkin, Consultant for H C Smith LTD.

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