

BUSINESS

Minority Business Accelerator building foundations of success

CLEVELAND – For Northeast Ohio to increase the well being of its economy, it is imperative to create more jobs. The Fund for Our Economic Future is making that possible throughout the Northeast Ohio region. One of the main focuses of The Fund is business growth and attraction. The Fund has granted \$46 million in grants to support regional projects that will create jobs and increase income.

One of the regional projects funded by The Fund for Our Economic Future is the MBA 2.5+, whose main focal point is growing the size, scale and infrastructure of Hispanic- and African American-owned enterprises with annual revenue of at least \$2 million in a 16-county area of Northeast Ohio. In 2008, the MBA 2.5+ assisted nine companies with completing business transactions and they plan to help another twelve companies for 2009, bringing their portfolio of clients to 21.

Cynthia Mumford, president and owner of Triple A Builders Inc., a Northeast Ohio commercial and residential construction company, has benefited from the MBA 2.5+.

Triple A Builders was started out of necessity. Mumford was one of the first homeowners to build a new home in the Hough neighborhood and the builders didn't complete the project. Taking matters into her own hands, Mumford took

construction courses to finish the project herself.

The MBA 2.5+ provided Triple A Builders with CEO mentoring and coaching, administrative training and support, and access to opportunities and capital.

"The coaching is the most valuable point," says Mumford of the MBA 2.5+. The MBA 2.5+ has contributed to the growth and sustainability of Triple A Builders by providing resources and hands on training.

"Triple A Builders is just one of many Minority Business Enterprises in this community that is simply looking for an opportunity to participate – once they are afforded the opportunity, it is up to them to deliver the results and deliver value," said Andrew Jackson, senior vice president and executive director for the Commission on Economic Inclusion of Greater Cleveland Partnership.

A top priority for Triple A Builders is customer services and quality workmanship, as well as priding themselves on workforce diversity, and commitment to implementing and practicing green sustainable construction practices and procedures to all of their projects.

The relationship between the MBA 2.5+ and Triple A Builders has increased Mumford's confidence and ambition as a person and business owner. Northeast Ohio has



Cynthia Mumford

provided Mumford the opportunity to grow her business and provide employment opportunities to other Northeast Ohio residents. Mumford's long term goal is to build a third or fourth generational business with all three of her children are involved in the company.

Triple A Builders is currently working on its largest construction project, the Juvenile Justice Center, where it is responsible for the interior and external walls, metal stud framing, as well as, the vapor retarder and barrier for the cen-

ter's architectural fiberglass dome.

The knowledge that Mumford has taken from the MBA 2.5+ has allowed her company to grow, as well as give back to the community. Because of her success, Mumford has made a point to participate in many programs throughout the community, including the Cleveland PAL's Builders of Tomorrow program.