



MINORITY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

Impact Report - 2024 Q2

The Minority Empowerment Program (MEP) is an initiative of the Chamber designed to bring Black and Hispanic owned and led businesses and nonprofits into the community conversation through Chamber membership, resulting in a more inclusive environment and approach toward business growth throughout the region. As a program under the Tampa Bay Chamber's "Inclusive Organization" pillar, MEP strives to create an environment where all feel welcome.

Along with the benefits of a **Fit 3 Chamber Membership**, participants also receive quarterly specialized programming, invitations to special sessions, and networking events with the Chamber's Minority Business Accelerator participants.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



PURPOSE

AT&T, a member of the Tampa Bay Chamber, approached the Chamber about creating a program that would increase the participation and relationships of Black and Hispanic owned and led businesses and non-profits.

AT&T, Amgen, Moffitt Cancer Center, Bush Ross, Florida Natural Gas, Bank of America, Phoenix Portfolio, Fifth Third Bank and Tampa Bay Food Trucks all funded the fourth year of the MEP program.

The goal of the Minority Empowerment Program is to welcome more Black and Hispanic businesses and nonprofits into chamber membership, making the Chamber organization better positioned to listen to the input, and to represent the perspectives, of Black and Hispanic owned organizations that are vital to the economic and social health of the Tampa Bay area. This results in a more inclusive and equitable approach toward business growth and community engagement throughout the region, while also connecting more businesses with Chamber resources for growth and development.

IMPACT SUCCESS

- The sponsors of the Minority Empowerment Program provide 16 one-year FIT3 (top tier) Chamber memberships to Black and Hispanic owned businesses and non-profits that were not already chamber members.
- All the participants attended an Orientation to learn about programs, events and initiatives that are available to them to engage with the Chamber while expanding their professional relationships and connections.
- 16 companies were identified as excellent candidates for this year long program that is designed to scale business development and growth.
- Participants are encouraged to attend premier networking events.
- Personal connections are facilitated at Business Around the Bay, a small group of business leaders' roundtable discussion to cover a variety of topics.
- Direct business connections lead to new business opportunities including MEP to MEP partnerships and MEP to member partnerships.

SESSIONS

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|---|
| | JAN. 16 | Member Orientation "Welcome to the Tampa Bay Chamber" |
| QUARTER 1 | FEB. 15 | Presenting Powerfully and Masterful Marketing |
| QUARTER 2 | MAY 15 | Doing Business with the City of Tampa and Hillsborough County |
| QUARTER 3 | AUG. 13 | Business Planning - Access to Capital |
| QUARTER 4 | DEC. 3 | End of Year Session |

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE CITY OF TAMPA AND HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

This session focused on doing business with local government. Each guest spoke about the various processes and intricacies of working with the government that may be different from working with private sector companies.

PRESENTERS

CT Harris – Small Business Navigator, Economic Opportunity – City of Tampa – 306 E Jackson St. 8th Floor North, Tampa, Florida 33602

Amanda Alfarah – Project Coordinator, Economic Opportunity – City of Tampa – 306 East Jackson St. 3rd Floor North / Tampa, Florida 33602

Gwen Sevaetasi, CCA – Special Projects Coordinator – Hillsborough County MBE/SBE Programs – Economic Development

Amy Rench – Supplier Engagement Coordinator – Hillsborough County BOCC Procurement Services – Economic Development

ONLINE

► Facebook post

The Minority Empowerment Program continues to have continued activity on the webpage on the Tampa Bay Chamber website.

► MEP Online

EVENTS

- Tampa Bay at Sunset
- Competitive Edge
- Networking 101
- Return on Relationships
- Women of Influence
- After Five
- Priority Invitation to Benchmarking
- Public Policy Roundtable
- Circle of Influence

2024 PARTICIPANTS



2024 CHAIR

Kosetty Polanco
Bank of America



The Almond Group
Monica Maybeck, Owner & CEO



E2E Cleaning Services Inc.
Johnny Nunes, Owner



Blind Tiger
Roberto Torres, Founder and CEO



KathyTimesWOW
Kathy Times, Owner & CEO



Booze and Bubbles
CJ Thompson, Founder & CEO



Power Real Estate Group
Celina Weathersby, Owner, Broker, and Agent



BUP Technologies Inc
Martika Jones, Founder & CEO



Project and Engineering Solutions LLC
Quante Ferguson, Founder and CEO



Butler & Gary Logistics, LLC
Milton Butler III, President



Prymel Elements
Allysen Kerr Founder & CEO



ClearSet.AI
Yasmine Gardener, Founder & CEO



Saturday Shoppes
Renee Edwards, Founder & CEO



Coachman Global
Ridell Saddler, Owner



TriOrb Solutions
Joe Tibor, Founder and CEO



The Collective Wellness Institute
Dr. Shnai Simmons Founder & CEO



We Go All Places, LLC
Maurice White, Owner

PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHTS

THE ALMOND GROUP

Our CEO Monica Maybank was **featured on Channel 8** discussing ways to mitigate mental health during mental health awareness month. The Almond Group launched a new corporate **promo video**.

BLIND TIGER

The coffee café has a monumental quarter with two ribbon cuttings! The brand continues to thrive and expand in Hillsborough County! This marks the company's 7th location.

Blind Tiger also launched a new coffee flavor. With a rich taste that could tempt legendary pirate José Gaspar himself, Visit Tampa Bay, in partnership with Tampa's very own Blind Tiger Coffee Roasters, has unlocked even more precious treasure by introducing a signature coffee, Pirate's Plunder.



BUP

BŪP signs MOU with women's networking & co-working space

BŪP to launch HubSpot & Zoho integration campaign

BŪP will pitch in the semi-finals of Women's Fast Pitch

BŪP to launch new update of AI-powered follow-up email drafts

BŪP successfully migrated users & is improving the onboarding process

CLEARSET. AI

ClearSet.AI pitching our construction technology at the **Building Success Summit** on May 31 - June 2 to raise Series A funding.

Founder & CEO has accepted Board of Directors position for **Oasis Opportunities Non-Profit!**

Let's talk about tech in real estate! Tune in to **Ariel Herrera's** insightful **podcast episode featuring two pioneering AI experts** who are revolutionizing the real estate and construction sectors. Both women are founders and highly respected in their fields and communities.

E2E CLEANING SERVICES

E2E was honored May 15 during the **Annual SBDC Florida Business Awards** at the USF Marshall Center. The Florida SBDC at USF is a member of the statewide partnership program nationally accredited by the Association of America's SBDCs and funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Department of Defense, State of Florida. The center at USF serves as the network's lead host institution in Florida.

E2E was selected from nominees across the region, which includes Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, Pasco, Manatee, Sarasota, Hernando, Highlands, Hardee, and DeSoto Counties. We're proud to see two additional Chamber Member companies take part in the annual awards celebrating small business - Suncoast Credit Union was a sponsor and the Columbia Restaurant's Andrea Gonzmart Williams delivered the keynote address

EVERYDAY SHOPPES

In Q2 the company added 25 new vendors, improved vendor revenue by 65%. We have also started training for vendors on pricing for profit.

FIFTH THIRD

Third Thursdays – Come and be inspired and get empowered by a robust panel that encourages business owners to maximize their business opportunities within the community. Every third Thursday!

HART

Join us to learn how to do business with HART. Meet with various departments within HART and learn about the upcoming procurement needs. Network with other local government agencies with available opportunities as well as discover how to obtain small business and disadvantaged business certification.

BECK & ENVISION

Expansion Project for Tampa Museum of Art. Trade partners interested in bidding on the project can participate in the process at this event.

MOFFITT CANCER CENTER

Moffitt Cancer Center is seeking proposals from vendors with a comprehensive to support streamlined processes to optimize comparative medicine core programmatic efficiencies. Continued collaboration with Moffitt for supplier diversity with RFP's.

NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP CENTER

Invitation for Board Fellowship program. Diverse boards are crucial to ensuring that nonprofit organizations have the broad perspectives necessary to understand the constituents they serve, creatively address emerging problems, plan effectively, and expand donor engagement. Yet national research shows 84% of nonprofit board members are white, with nearly 1 in 3 nonprofits lacking any professionals of color on their boards (BoardSource).

In a Nonprofit Leadership Center survey of nonprofit CEOs, leaders said the most significant barrier to building a diverse board is having the knowledge and understanding to identify and recruit professionals of color who are passionate about the mission. Many admitted they didn't know where to start.

The Nonprofit Leadership Center's Advancing Racial Equity on Nonprofit Boards Fellowship is designed to:

- Advance racial and ethnic diversity, equity and inclusion on nonprofit boards throughout Tampa Bay
- Deepen the board governance knowledge and skills of professionals of color
- Equip select nonprofits to genuinely welcome participating board fellows and ensure their organizations are ready and committed to fostering more inclusive and equitable boards and cultures

AT&T

She's Connected – In partnership with Apply today to become a part of the She's Connected by AT&T community and for a chance to win \$50,000 for your small business, along with the full support of the She's Connected by AT&T platform. Spotlighting women who are striving to make their dreams a reality in the worlds of sport, business, entrepreneurship and community.

THE ALL-HART FOUNDATION

Building your Bankability - The training will focus on helping business owners learn about building their bankability. The course will go over the following:

And She Rises is an event you want to experience as an unforgettable evening of empowerment and enlightenment at The Refinery: And She Rises. Led by serial entrepreneur and economic empowerment champion Dr. Renée Baker, this restorative conversation is dedicated to uplifting women of color, amplifying our voices, and fostering growth in every aspect of our lives.

Delving into critical topics impacting us today, we'll explore the realms of health and wellness, delving into crucial issues such as maternal health, mental well-being, and self-care. Our discussions will extend to matters of wealth, where we'll redefine what it means to live a luxurious life and empower ourselves financially in the modern world. And, of course, we'll navigate the intricacies of love and relationships, offering insights into finding and nurturing meaningful connections in romance, friendship, and business.

But this event is more than just conversation. It's a celebration of resilience, strength, and sisterhood. The evening will be filled with entertainment to uplift the spirit, a curated night market showcasing the talents and creations of women entrepreneurs, and delectable fare to indulge the senses.

USF OFFICE OF SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT

USF Office of Supplier Development and Engagement in partnership with Skanska USA is excited to announce the launch of the 2024-2025 Mentor Protégé Program. Participating business owners will receive guidance in the fundamental areas of construction business management, with topics covering environmental health and safety, field management, human resources, marketing and business development, legal, project accounting and finances, project planning and preconstruction, and sustainability. In addition to the 10-weekly training sessions, participants will have an opportunity to participate in hands-on clinical experiences and much more. For this program, we are specifically seeking small and diverse owned construction-focused companies that have been in business for at least one year.

MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CORP

Exclusive Networking event, Exclusive Business Mixer for Professionals in Transportation and Horizontal Construction. Industry Insights: Connect with leaders and professionals specializing in transportation and horizontal construction. Gain valuable insights and explore potential collaborations to advance your business.

Build Connections: Engage in meaningful discussions and cultivate relationships with peers who share your dedication to excellence in transportation infrastructure. Meet representatives from Wells Fargo, HART, Prince Contracting, PSTA, Hensel Phelps, Florida DOT.

LATINO BUSINESS ACTION NETWORK

Special event invitation: We empower Latino entrepreneurship across the country. In partnership with Stanford University, we leverage world-class business research methods and business teachings of the Graduate School of Business and apply them to the growing number of Latino entrepreneurs across the nation. Special event invitation held at Blind Tiger and sponsored by Florida Natural Gas. "The State of Latino Entrepreneurial Business".

EDUCATION INSTITUTE OF TAMPA FAMILY

One invitation to the resource fair that will provide family education, resources, entertainment as we partner with our HUB organizations and companies to support the community.

COMMUNITY BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

MAKING WAVES

Making the list as one of the top **50 women making waves in Tampa**, 2024 MEP Participant Dr. Shnai Simmons is on this list!

MOFFITT CANCER CENTER

Moffitt Cancer Center is seeking proposals from vendors with a comprehensive to support streamlined processes to optimize comparative medicine core programmatic efficiencies. Continued collaboration with Moffitt for supplier diversity with RFP's.

BLIND TIGER

Fox 13 morning show was **live at Blind Tiger Café** on July 5.

TBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anticipation is building among MEP entrepreneurs in this year's cohort after more than a dozen **Board of Directors committed to engaging with a participant!** This is the highest level of engagement by any Board in the program's three-year history! The class of sixteen Black and Hispanic business owners will engage with the "Chamber Buddies" during the 1-year cohort. The commitment from Board Members further supports the Inclusive Pillar of our Chamber's strategic plan, now entering year 8.

Also in March, each MEP participant was introduced to their sponsor company. These amazing Chamber Member Companies & MEP Sponsors - and corresponding individual mentors for each MEP entrepreneur - include AMGEN, AT&T, Bank of America, Bush/Ross, Fifth Third Bank, Florida Natural Gas, Moffitt Cancer Center, Phoenix Portfolio Partners, Tampa Bay Food Trucks, Whiting - Turner, and our Chamber's Military Bay, USA!

Borrowing a line from Leadership Tampa, MEP members have begun to call their cohort of participants & sponsors "THE Best Class Ever"!

EVERYDAY SHOPPES ON BAY NEWS 9

Everyday Shoppes owner, **Renee Edwards was featured on Bay News 9.**

TBC MILITARY FEATURE

Aaron Santosus was featured in the Chamber's 2nd Annual Military Appreciation Interview Series.

BUTLER & GARY LOGISTICS, LLC

"[MEP] has opened so many doors to networking, business networking and community networking events," said Butler. "It helps us to grow our bandwidth. We're learning different strategies and concepts." Butler and his wife Lelia, both MEP entrepreneurs, are also asking a lot of questions! "How did you get started in your business? What are some dos and don'ts? My wife just went to a Chamber event yesterday morning and she left with people's contact information! She's staying in touch with individuals she's met at other Chamber networking events!" - Milton Butler



Chamber Ambassador Karl Davis delivering 1 year membership Anniversary gift bag to Natalie Freeman of Edward Jones-Office of Natalie Freeman. Both Karl and Natalie were members of the 2023 MEP program.

COMMUNITY BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

DUCON, LLC



2022 MEP Alumni company **DuCon has been selected** in one of the most highly anticipated construction projects at the University of South Florida in decades - the new stadium to open in 2027! After an extensive bidding process involving companies nationwide, the university has selected DuCon, LLC as a construction manager for the new stadium! The Chamber Member company is a proud graduate of our Minority Empowerment Program's 2022 cohort.

THE ALMOND GROUP & CHANNEL 8

CEO **Monica Maybank was featured on Channel 8** discussing ways to mitigate mental health during mental health awareness month.

E2E

Receives 2024 Business of the Year award from **SBDC**. E2E Cleaning Services on their recognition by the Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at USF! **E2E was named Minority Owned Business of the Year!**

E2E was selected from nominees across the region, which includes Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk, Pasco, Manatee, Sarasota, Hernando, Highlands, Hardee, and DeSoto Counties. We're proud to see two additional Chamber Member companies take part in the annual awards celebrating small business - Suncoast Credit Union was a sponsor and the Columbia Restaurant's Andrea Gonzmart Williams delivered the keynote address!

E2E was accepted into the 2024 Mentor Protégé program! The University of South Florida Office of Supplier Diversity 2024 Mentor Protégé Program actively engages Tampa Bay area small and diverse construction focused subcontractors in a comprehensive training and development program. We are excited to welcome Skanska USA as our 2024 program partner. This 10-week initiative aims to fortify businesses and enhance their capacity. Participants benefit from instruction provided by USF faculty and staff, Skanska USA and other USF strategic industry experts.

