

The Langston

Vol 25 Iss 4

Tabor 100 Newsletter

*Watering the roots
of our community*

APRIL 2025



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Tabor Neighbors!

Finally, Spring is here and I wake up most mornings to a sunrise to behold.

The changing of the weather gives me hope and I remember what it was like a few months ago when we woke up to rain and overcast skies every day. I knew Spring would be here and simply accepted the gloomy days knowing better weather was coming.

I talk a lot about political issues here and do so because they sometimes lay the groundwork for all of us accessing opportunity, regardless of size and type of business. It is important to note that the state legislature is about to end its session (April 27) and, as always, some changes will be in store for us afterwards. Paula Sardinas with FMS Global has written about some of that in this edition of the Langston. Take a look.

Let me emphasize that the success of any business is built on relationships.

Relationships with your employees, clients and both public and private entities seeking out your business. In

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

- Philippians 4:13

the case of the City of Seattle, King County, Sound Transit and the state of Washington, they offer regular opportunities to meet with their staff at Tabor 100's offices weekly. I won't go into the details because there are too many, but suffice it to say that you can get the undivided attention of folks who may need what you offer by coming to the HUB.

If your firm is trying to do business with any public agency, I suggest you call the Tabor 100 front desk at 206-368-4042 and ask for the latest schedule of those agencies that have "office hours" at our building.

Each has a different policy in terms of time spent with them, but each offers a minimum of 15 minutes to talk with them about their agencies and how you can do business with them. And if whoever you meet with can't help, they can refer you to someone who can. That 15 minutes can make a huge difference in the direction of your business.

I will end here and ask that you also take advantage of the Technical Assistance offered by Tabor 100, show up at our monthly membership meeting to connect with influential folks face-to-face and make sure you attend classes, workshops and seminars that occur each month here at Tabor 100.

Ollie Garrett | CEO and President



Door Swings

April 2025 Visits | 2,547
 Since Opening | 29,383

*Happy Women's
 History Month!*



We must stand together –
 Still, we Rise!

**We are not
 going back!!**

SAVE the DATE

- 6 MAY**
 6:00 - 8:00 PM
 @ The Hub
**Marketing Crash Courses
 Workshop**
- 10 MAY**
 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
 @ The Hub
OSHA 30 Certification Class
- 14 MAY**
 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
 @ The Hub
OMWBE Certification
- 20 MAY**
 6:00 - 8:00 PM
 @ The Hub
Small Business Workshop
- 31 MAY**
 10:00 AM - Noon
 @ The Hub
**Tabor General Membership
 Meeting**

New Members – APRIL

- | | |
|--|--|
| Julio Cesar Maldonado
Mediums Collective
Clothing | Cristobal Mondragon
Bumble Bee Cleaning
Services |
| Roger Maldonado
Mediums Collective
Clothing | Cynthia Walcker
Walcker Environmental
Services, LLC |
| Brian Trice
Western Washington Clean
Cities Coalition | Dayo Edwards
DayoSense Catering |
| Jonnah Ayala
Talyer LLC | Elmer Dulla
FamilyFriend |
| Tesfaye Gebrekidan
Conspagna Ethiopian
Restaurant LLC | Jam Collins
COLLRICH, LLC |
| Greg Taylor
Community Connection
Consulting | Keith Floyd
Soul Fusion Food LLC |
| Omer Qureshi
Americans for Equality | Leslie Byrd
Alpha Sharp Development
Partners Inc |
| Keya Veney
The People Project | Paola Taylor
Strategic Business Solutions |
| Nate Miles
Hyflyers, LLC | Stephanie Morales
Made Space Seattle |
| Michael Glover
Blessed and Not Stressed
LLC | Tara Dubois
Complete Driving Experience |
| Brian Myers
Tabletop Village LLC | Casey Parker
Commemorative Sports
Towel |
| Colina Bruce
Noir Lux Candle Co | Christopher Medina
Prime GTM LLC |
| | Maria Olivia Gabales |
| | Dr. Keisha Scarlett
WOV N LLC & Rubescent
LLC |

Have a question related to
 labor laws?
 Scan this QR code or email:
zene.hall@tabor100.org



SAVE THE DATE

Tabor 100
*24th Annual
 Captains of Industry Gala*

“We Rise by Lifting Others”

**SATURDAY,
 SEPTEMBER 20, 2025**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR
 THIS NIGHT OF CELEBRATION
 AND RECOGNITION!

MORE INFORMATION TO COME.



**When The Roots Are DEEP,
 There Is No Reason To Fear The Storm!**



Tabor 100 Partners with Comcast to Announce \$3 Million in Grants to Local Small Business Owners

We invite you to join us at Tabor 100 at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, April 30, when Comcast will

announce that it will award 100 small businesses in King County with over \$3 million in monetary, marketing, and technology grants through the Comcast RISE program. Presenters will include King County Executive Shannon Braddock, Mayor Bruce Harrell, City of Seattle, Marianne Bichsel, Comcast External Affairs Vice President, Rachel Smith, President & CEO, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and local small business owners who are former Comcast RISE grant recipients.

Comcast RISE is supporting the growth of small businesses and entrepreneurs committed to uplifting their local communities with comprehensive grant packages that include a technology makeover, creative production, a media schedule, educational resources, a \$5,000 monetary grant, and business consultation services.

"Seattle wouldn't be Seattle without our small businesses—they create jobs, build community, and add to the vibrancy of our neighborhoods," said Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell. "From inflation to public safety concerns, I hear directly from business owners about the challenges they



face and their desire to succeed here. That's why we're excited to welcome the Comcast Rise grant program back to not just Seattle, but all of King County — which offers more than just financial support, but critical investments in technology, marketing and operations to help businesses stabilize, grow and succeed. Our local economy depends on all of us —public and private sectors — working together and leveraging our resources to build a stronger and more resilient economy."

According to a U.S. Chamber of Commerce report last month, revenue concerns are surging as inflation remains a dominant challenge for small businesses. The concern for inflation reached a new high with 58% of small business owners reporting inflation as a top concern. Further, more than 1 in 3 small business owners are concerned about revenue, the highest share since 2021.

"Small business owners are facing significant financial concerns and economic uncertainty, and we want to help," said Rodrigo Lopez, Region Senior Vice President for Comcast in the Pacific Northwest. "Among the many things we all love about the greater Seattle area is our vibrant small businesses community and we strongly encourage small business owners to apply to Comcast RISE. This program is designed to give you the resources to help your business thrive and contribute to the economic growth and resilience of our community."

From May 1-31, eligible small businesses in King County can apply for the Comcast RISE program at www.ComcastRISE.com. Winners will be notified in August. Starting in April and throughout May, local small businesses can learn more about the Comcast RISE program, eligibility requirements, and how to apply by attending free information sessions being held by Comcast RISE community partner organizations, including the Bellevue Chamber, Greater Seattle

Business Association (GSBA), Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce, and Tabor 100.



"When it comes to small businesses, we all know the challenges: we've seen the news, the closure notices, the boarded-up storefronts," said Rachel Smith, president and CEO of the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. "But there is good news on the horizon with another round of Comcast RISE grants and services to support Puget Sound region small businesses. Too many of our small businesses are on the bubble, and Comcast is serious about being part of the solution by offering financial support and technology services that help local businesses get a leg up. These businesses are the social fabric of our neighborhoods, and that's why the Chamber is thrilled to be partnering with Comcast to help our members connect to this opportunity."

King County is one of five regions selected by Comcast in which 100 local businesses will be awarded the grant package. Other regions where small businesses will be awarded grant packages include Boston (MA), Grand Rapids (MI), Nashville (TN), and South Valley (UT). These recipients join the 14,000 entrepreneurs nationwide who have been selected as Comcast RISE recipients since the program launched in late 2020. Comcast RISE is part of Project UP, the company's comprehensive initiative to create digital opportunity and help build a future of unlimited possibilities.

"Among the many things we all love about the greater Seattle area is our vibrant small businesses community and we strongly encourage small business owners to apply to Comcast RISE."

— *Rodrigo Lopez, Regional Senior Vice President for Comcast Pacific Northwest*

More information on eligibility requirements and details on how to apply are available at www.ComcastRISE.com

Shaped by Expectation: How Elizabeth Paulsen's Mother, Resilience, and Mentorship Define Her Entrepreneurial Legacy

When you meet Elizabeth Paulsen, founder and

president of Cascade e-Commerce Solutions, Inc. (CeSI), you quickly sense that her story is one of grit, vision, and a deep commitment to lifting others. But at the heart of her journey lies a force that shaped her very foundation: her mother's unwavering expectation and belief.

The Power of a Mother's Belief

Elizabeth's childhood was marked by significant challenges. In second grade, she was misdiagnosed as "mentally retarded" and told she would never be college material. But her mother, Wilma, refused to accept this. "She took that as a challenge and tutored me all the way from second grade through high school, got me into specialists, and they helped her," Elizabeth recalls. It was Wilma who discovered Elizabeth's profound hearing loss and advocated for the surgeries

that restored her hearing. She also devised creative strategies to help Elizabeth overcome dyslexia, using everything from sandpaper-cut letters to muscle memory exercises.

"My mom was just an advocate, you know, got me what I needed in terms of the surgeries and then tutored me," Elizabeth says. "She really taught me resilience—taught me how to, when people say you can't do this, step back and evaluate: is it a good thing? Would it be a blessing to me and to other people? Is it beneficial? Then I'm going to show I can do it. I'm just going to do it."

This foundation of expectation and advocacy not only propelled Elizabeth through her education—including a scholarship to Mount Holyoke College—but also instilled in her a quiet



determination to persevere, no matter the odds.

Resilience Forged in Adversity

Elizabeth's adult life brought its own tests. Her first marriage was upended by her husband's sudden illness and subsequent abuse, forcing her to rebuild from scratch as a single mother. She found work in aerospace, then healthcare, rising through the ranks despite health setbacks of her own. "I was very ambitious," she says, "but you have to face it and have seasons of life."

When she and her second husband, Glynn, decided to start CeSI in 1998, the family's history with failed businesses loomed large. "My birth family was not positive about it," she admits. Yet, Elizabeth persisted, drawing on the mentorship of multi-generational business owners and the Small Business Development Center. "If you use that time well to reorganize all your files, to upgrade your systems, to train your staff, when the downturn turns around, you will be in a better position than you were going into it. And he was so right."

Through recessions, 9/11, and COVID-19, Elizabeth's resilience never wavered. She credits her ability to adapt and grow to the lessons of her mother—and to the support of a community she

intentionally built around her business.

Entrepreneurship as a Pathway for Others

From the beginning, Elizabeth and Glynn were intentional about making CeSI a corporation, hiring staff, and creating a business that could outlast them. "I believe in community. And I think a business, regardless of how big or small it is, establishes a community," she explains. "You have the staff who work in that business and their families, and then you have the customers and clients and their families. And you're creating an ecosystem that you want to have continue on."

Elizabeth's commitment to mentorship is woven into CeSI's

DNA. "We've had at least 34 staff since 1998, and most stay from three to five years. They gain skills that allow them to move on to their dream job. And I take such delight in knowing that even though I haven't been in the field of education, I've been a pathway. Our business has been a pathway to people."

She celebrates when her employees "get their wings," moving on to bigger opportunities. "I love seeing people grow and succeed. And I love it when they have creative ideas and being able to help them implement and make it happen."

A Legacy of Empowerment

Now, with offices on both coasts and a thriving team, Elizabeth

remains focused on empowering others—whether it's helping Tabor 100 members build their digital presence or supporting her staff's professional growth. "I don't mind being, our business being the best kept secret of a business's success because I feel their success is my success. It all comes back to that teacher mentality."

Elizabeth Paulsen's story is a testament to the enduring power of expectation, resilience, and the belief that true leadership means giving others their wings. Her mother's lessons echo in every life she touches, ensuring that her legacy is one of empowerment, community, and hope.



2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE:

Through THE EYES OF THE WBBA



By: Paula Sardinas, Chief Advocate WBBA

Tracking Progress & Advocating for Inclusive Economic Policy

Day 100 of the 2025 Legislative Session:

A Milestone of Impact and Progress for Tabor Members

As we mark Day 100 of the 2025 Legislative Session, our work on behalf of Tabor 100 and its members has been nothing short of transformative. Over the past three months, we have actively advanced more than 20 bills and secured critical investments across operations, transportation, and education, representing millions of dollars directly affecting the growth and sustainability of minority-owned businesses across Washington State.

Our advocacy has been prolific in scope and strategy in execution during this session. From securing funding in the capital and operating budgets to ensuring equitable access to procurement and infrastructure contracts, we've partnered with legislative leaders, state agencies, and community coalitions to deliver tangible results. Every policy pushed and every dollar fought for reflects Tabor's unwavering commitment to economic justice and systems-level change.

What follows is a detailed overview of our legislative activity, budget wins, and next steps as we prepare for the final stretch of session—and lay the groundwork for future victories.



Bill Tracking: Tabor 100 FY25 Legislative Priorities

HB 1308 – Access to Personnel Records

Defines employee access rights to personnel documentation, a priority issue for fair employment practices.

- Passed the legislature
- and signed by the Senate President

HB 1549 – Responsible Bidder Criteria

Modifies responsible bidder standards for public works projects to strengthen equity in contracting.

- Passed the legislature. Signed by the Governor. Eff. 07/27/2025

HB 1503 – Digital Equity

Furthering digital opportunity in underserved areas.

- Bill died in Ways and Means.
- WBBA is working with OOE on the next steps.

HB 1633 - Public Works / Bidding

Concerning prime contractor bidding submission requirements on public works contracts.

- Passed the Senate and the House.

HB 1967 – Design-build projects/bonds

Adjusting bonding requirements for design phases in public works.

- The governor signed.
- Effective date 7/27/2025.

SB 5061 – Prevailing Wage Enforcement

Ensures public works wages reflect the prevailing wage when work is performed.

- Died in Capital Budget, 04/04/25

SB 5098 - Weapons Restrictions in Public Spaces with Children

Restricting the possession of weapons on the premises of state or local public buildings, parks or playground facilities where children are likely to be present, and county fairs and county fair facilities..

- On the House floor on Second Reading Calendar

SB 5215 - Securing Vehicle Loads on Public Highways

Concerning debris escaping from vehicles on public highways.

- WBBA Amended, Rules 2

HB 2081: Modifying Business and Occupation Tax Surcharges

- This bill would increase the Business and Occupation (B&O) tax by 0.05% on small businesses.

SB 5104 - Immigration Status Coercion

Protecting employees from coercion in the workplace based on immigration status.

- Signed by Speaker and Senate President- on the way to the Governor.

SB 5176 – Prompt Pay

Implements recommendations from the Capital Projects Advisory Review Board to ensure timely payments for contractors and subcontractors.

- Died in Ways and Means
- WBBA is working on the FY26 Bill

SB 5292 – Paid Family & Medical Leave Rates

Adjusts contribution rates and equity mechanisms for Washington's Paid Family and Medical Leave program.

- In Rules 2 - Being Debated
- WBBA expressed concerns via the Black Caucus.

SB 5414 – Social Equity Audits

Requiring equity impact analysis in audits and public hearings.

- Delivered to the Governor

SB 5422 – Collective Bargaining/AI Use

Allowing negotiations over AI's workplace use

- Died in Ways and Means
- WBBA had policy concerns.

SB 5503 - Public Employee Bargaining

Concerning public employee collective bargaining processes.

- Passed the House, amended, Senate must concur

SB 5539 – Paid Family & Medical Leave

Expanding worker protections under the state paid family and medical leave program.

- Died in Labor and Commerce

SB 5549 – Job Applicants and Employees

Expanding protections under the Washington Fair Chance Act.

- Referred, but not heard

SB 5708 – Protecting WA Children Online

Establishes digital safety provisions and protections for minors online.

- Died in Consumer and Business Protections

By Paula Sardinas, Chief Advocate, WBBA

As we enter the final stretch of this legislative session, our charge is clear: protect the progress we've made and push boldly for the future we deserve. The WBBA remains steadfast in our mission to center equity, opportunity, and justice in every budget and every bill. Our communities are not asking for favors—they are demanding what is rightfully theirs. Let's finish strong.

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An interview with Roger Maldonado, Founder with Cesar Maldonado of Mediums Collective

By Darold Bivens

From selling print t-shirts and graphics from the trunk of their car to opening a store in Capitol Hill that designs and sells original fashionware heavily influenced by hip hop and Seattle culture, brothers Roger and Cesar Maldonado created Mediums Collective, a clothing company, to foster community and showcase cultural representation within Seattle, WA. Starting back in 2014, Roger said he and his brother originally gained inspiration to create Mediums Collective from one of Roger's UW college projects, using entrepreneurship as a way to foster community and creativity via fashion and design.

"It was really just a venture of being passionate about fashion, being passionate about culture, being passionate about representing a specific style" Roger said. "[It] is something that me and my brother always shared."

Being at a crossroads between joining the corporate workforce or opening their own business despite having no previous experience, Roger said he and Cesar were driven by their passion and hustle for entrepreneurship to create Mediums Collective. Originally starting as a print t-shirt company from the back of their car, Roger said the business eventually evolved into one focused on fashion and textile design.

"[It was] really a curation of culture," Roger said. "Clothing and culture kind of go hand-in-hand. For us, fashion was the medium that we used to be able to cultivate culture around what we believed in."

However, the road to their success has been long and very challenging, Roger said, including funding and resource hurdles in a very competitive market.

"It's been a challenge, especially right now with the economy and the climate the world is in today" Roger said. "It's not an easy industry. Most of us in the creative space are undervalued for the services that we do."

With these challenges in mind, Roger said Mediums Collective benefited greatly from resources and programs such as The Liberty Project and Tabor 100 as a whole. The Liberty Project is a program that prioritizes the growth and representation of black-owned and minority-owned businesses in Seattle at a rate equal to their representation in the city's population. Originally referred to the program through their existing relationship with Seattle University, Roger said both the Liberty Project and Tabor 100 at large have helped Mediums Collectives immensely by connecting them to resources they'd otherwise not have access to.

"We are grateful they came with the support. Having a program to offer resources to small businesses is something that we kind of need in this community."

— Roger Maldonado

One example Roger mentioned is that Tabor 100 provided Mediums Collective with a loan to help secure an account with Seattle University to produce urban streetwear merchandise. Mediums Collective would go on to secure additional accounts and opportunities and paid the loan back to Tabor 100 timely.

To reward them for their timely payment, Tabor 100 granted the funds to Mediums Collective- this time as a grant, not a loan. Completely shocked, The Maldonado brothers expressed immense thanks for the grant. "[It was] definitely unexpected," Roger said. "Super grateful to Tabor 100 for sure."

Fast-forward over ten years later, Mediums Collective now has a storefront in the Capitol Hill district in Seattle, acting not just as a retail location, but as a physical venue to curate culture and nurture community through fashion-centric shows



and events. These decisions and accomplishments solidified Mediums Collective as a staple of the Seattle community, which would lead to incredible opportunities such as having a fashion show at the Bumbershoot 2024 Music Festival that further cemented the company as a credible brand.

"It was a beautiful moment" said Roger. "Seattle is not known for fashion, so it feels good to pioneer a street fashion movement in Seattle."

Having a desire to help other up-and-coming small business owners, Roger said one of the biggest pieces of advice he'd give is that it's always OK to ask for help.

"A lot of us sometimes think we have to do it on our own, tis' the beauty and the curse of being an entrepreneur" Roger said. "Ask for help when it's needed, when you need it, because you never know who's there to help."

Medium's Collective will be showcasing their Fall and Winter designs at the "Back to the streets- De Vuelta A La Calle" fashion show on June 14th, 2025, at their location in Capitol Hill on East Pike Street in Seattle, WA. To learn more about Medium's collective, visit their website mediumscollective.com or follow them on Instagram [@mediumscollective](https://www.instagram.com/mediumscollective).



April Highlights



Membership Meeting





Access to Equal Opportunity

The Port of Seattle is committed to building a strong, inclusive economy. With the Diversity in Contracting Resolution, we're making sure that includes businesses like yours.

Our goal is to triple the number of women and minority-owned businesses that contract with the Port by 2024 and remove barriers to expand the development of other disadvantaged business enterprises.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS AND SKILLS WITH THE PORT:

1. Bid on open contacts

Register your business in our database, and search and apply for contracts through a clear and fair process on <http://bit.ly/Facts19>.

2. Train with PortGen Workshops

Excited for opportunities but not sure where to start? We're here to support you. Join quarterly workshops to learn how to do business with the Port, get certified as a vendor, and network with representatives.

3. Learn on our site

Access resources year-round on the site. From video how-tos to lists of upcoming opportunities and events, you can find all the information you need for success.

[Learn More](#)

<http://bit.ly/Facts19>