

The Langston

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Tabor 100 Newsletter

Black Wall Street

The tragic but inspiring history of African-American prosperity

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Tabor

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Tabor Neighbors, I very much enjoyed seeing you all at the January meeting.

Some of you stayed way beyond noon, which is great and something I encourage you to continue to do. The Tabor HUB is your place to capture opportunities and I am hoping that we are presenting people, agencies and news that will allow you to prosper in your business.

So that leads me to my request of you for 2024. While I want you to join, I also want you to participate. We just welcomed new Board member Shannon Horton as our membership Chair and if you have a talent in one area or another, let's have a conversation. A great way to bolster your resume and meet folks you might not meet otherwise, is to volunteer. We have many committees that could use your help and we are starting our Gala committee early because this year's Gala will celebrate 25 years of Tabor 100 – a milestone if I ever saw one! Talk to me about serving on the

Gala Committee – it is one of the most rewarding activities you can engage in at Tabor 100.

Getting back to our General membership meetings. We want you to stay past our noon deadline and we want you to be a regular at the HUB, using the facilities and connecting with agencies and individuals who will help you grow your business. Unlike some others, we intend to have in-person meetings without a video feed because the nature of success in business revolves around relationships, both with your customer and the community.

This year, we want to encourage all of you to lift up someone else. Our format for the meetings is an extension of this – we have everyone introduce themselves so that you know who to talk to about your specific needs. Our technical assistance program is also geared toward ensuring we help one another. Helping others be successful is the best way for you to be successful in your own business.

So, once again, I urge you to volunteer, engage and participate in Tabor 100. We are totally committed to aiding other minority businesses. Over the 25 years of our working in the community, we have helped produce some of the most successful Black businesses in the state and intend to continue doing so.

Ollie Garrett | CEO and President

**"One person gives freely,
yet gains even more;
another withholds unduly,
but comes to poverty."**

– Proverbs 11:24



Door Swings

January 2024 | 269
Since Opening | 7,319

Most popular days are Wednesday & Thursday.
Come meet up with fellow members!

The Bruce Harrell is the highest reserved Room!
Let us know what makes the Bruce Harrell Room the best!



SAVE the DATE

15-17 March 45 Camp Jumpstart Weekend
6:00 PM Washington
@ The Hub

20 March OMWBE Business Certification
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
@ The Hub

20-21 March OSHA 10 Certification
4 - 9:00 PM
@ The Hub

30 March General Membership Meeting
10:00 AM - Noon
@ The Hub

New Members – February

- | | |
|---|---|
| Elwis Johnson
Johnson Wealth Advisors | Caleb Jackson
Uplift Investment Group |
| Rafael Ellison
ChargePros | Jennifer Luna
iUrban Teen & Black Women in STEM 2.0 |
| Matt Yang
MTD Electric Service | Jerry & Tameka Lamar
JJ Freemann Construction & Painting Agency |
| Ademola Obayan
Obayan Insurance Agency | Keelan Flowers
Flowers Real Estate Group |
| Natalie Hester | Derrick Fonville
D & M Truck, LLC |
| Asia Dillingham
A+ Bookkeeping & Payroll Services | Catherine Leavell
Crafja Consultant Services, LLC |
| Sean Levias
Levias Mobile Notary Service | |



Let us know what brings you to read the Langston! Have any feedback you've been thinking about? Or any topics we've been missing? Let us know what you want to see every month as we only rise by lifting together!

The Dawn of Success: Liberty Project unveils a year of growth for small businesses

by Zene Hall

When was the last time Monday sparked genuine joy? For small business owner Debbie Wilson, that moment arrived with the launch of the Liberty Project, a groundbreaking initiative spearheaded by Major Bruce Harrell. The inaugural event witnessed the convergence of the program's first cohort, comprised of distinguished participants from Tabor 100, the University of Washington's Foster School of Business, and Seattle

University's Albers Business Foundry. The anticipation of prosperity hung in the air, palpable among all attendees.

Under the astute guidance of the three anchor institutions – Tabor 100, UW, and Seattle U – the Liberty Project embarks on a transformative year-long journey, dedicated to fostering growth and catalyzing improvements for the enrolled businesses. This comprehensive support extends across the spectrum of business operations, including but not limited to marketing, technology management, finance, and accounting services.



“The Liberty Project is one of many tangible actions we are investing in to drive economic empowerment and create pathways to grow generational wealth, particularly for Black-, women- and other minority-owned businesses.”

– Mayor Bruce Harrell



The Liberty Project strategically targets businesses in key industries, focusing on retail, personal services, commercial construction, food and beverage manufacturing, restaurants, and power utilities. This deliberate selection stems from a dual rationale: a substantial presence of black-owned businesses in these sectors and a robust market demand for their offerings.



The program's impact is not confined to the initial cohort; rather, it envisions a continuous cycle of empowerment. Future cohorts are slated to be introduced every few months, ensuring a sustained and impactful upliftment of the community. The Liberty Project stands not just as a beacon of hope for the fortunate few who embarked on its maiden voyage but as a testament to the ongoing commitment to community growth and prosperity.



Brian Sims: Pioneering excellence in the signage and print industry through United Signs and Graphics and Evergreen Sign Co.

by Henry Yates

Tabor Board Chair, Brian Sims, has successfully navigated the business world for the last 24 years as the President and CEO of United Print, Signs and Graphics and Evergreen Sign Company.

Evergreen Sign Co.: A Journey of Quality

Evergreen Sign Co. is the largest minority signage company in the state. Beginning with humble origins, Evergreen Sign Co. prides itself on consistently going "the extra mile" for its clients.



The company boasts a portfolio of countless satisfied customers, demonstrating its steady growth over the years. Currently, employing 42 dedicated professionals, Evergreen Sign is frequently called upon by both public and private clients to undertake larger and more complex projects.

United Print Signs and Graphics: A Distinct Approach

United Print Signs and Graphics focuses on delivering comprehensive print and graphics solutions that cater to the specific needs of a diverse clientele.

United Print Signs and Graphics is a testament to Brian's commitment to quality and efficiency. The firm has adopted a "one-stop shop" approach, which ensures that clients receive high-quality deliverables within stipulated timeframes and budgets.



Investing for Success

Brian continually invests in both companies, striving to improve equipment, enhance marketing strategies, and recruit skilled employees. This dedication to innovation and competitiveness underscores his belief that success is not just for his benefit, but it has far-reaching implications for the broader minority business community.

A Community Leader with Tabor 100

Brian Sims' influence extends beyond the business world. He also serves as the Chair of the Tabor 100 Board, a role he has dedicated himself to for more than a decade. In this capacity, he actively supports and promotes Black-owned businesses, seeking to expand their presence in the marketplace.

"I go in 100% to help Tabor members and am always working to bring on more Black-owned firms," Brian emphasizes.



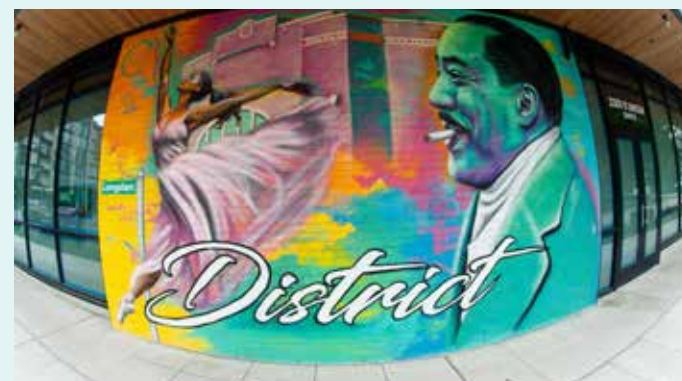
"The people who attend Tabor 100 meetings and the opportunities they share are impressive. I urge all Tabor 100 members to take full advantage of what the organization offers."

– Brian Sims, Tabor 100 Board Chair

The Role of Tabor 100: A Supportive Ecosystem

Brian acknowledges the pivotal role of Tabor 100 in his journey. This organization has provided invaluable support, fostering personal growth and business success. He affirms, "Access to decision-makers, technical assistance, and a network of mentors and friends dedicated to promoting your business are critical for your growth. The people who attend Tabor 100 meetings and the opportunities they share are impressive. I urge all Tabor 100 members to take full advantage of what the organization offers."

In Brian Sims, we see a leader who not only elevates the signage and printing industry but also empowers minority businesses. His ability to navigate diverse business landscapes, support his community, and continually invest in success makes him an inspiring figure for entrepreneurs and business leaders. Through Evergreen Sign Co. and United Print Signs and Graphics, Brian exemplifies the power of dedication, innovation, and community involvement in driving business excellence.



Black Wall Street

by Linda Kennedy

Black people have proven for centuries that we can ‘make a way out of no way.’ So it should be no surprise that a few who lived in Oklahoma, fed up with prejudice and lack of opportunity, dared to create their own business district in Tulsa. Just imagine. The sheer audacity of it drove white people to distraction.

But let us begin with the Trail of Tears and about 1832. Southern White colonizers who wanted to increase their cotton profits drove Native Americans [Indian Removal Act] from their land in places like Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. Five tribes signed on to the Act and one hundred thousand indigenous people trekked on foot or horseback, five thousand miles to Indian territory – Oklahoma. But these tribes owned four thousand Slaves – Black people. Talk about trying to fit in with White America! When they got to Oklahoma, the slaves had to rebuild what the Native Americans had lost in the deep south.

After the Civil War ended Blacks and Indians lived side by side. In 1887, the Dawes Act gave the freed Blacks among other things, two million acres of land. The land allotments allowed more than fifty Black townships to emerge – more than anywhere else in the country. In addition, after the Native Americans got their allotted shares of land, whatever was left, not valuable to whites, went up for sale.



A Black man named O.W. Gurley bought land and opened a grocery store on what would become Greenwood Avenue – the beginning of Black Wall Street.

Gurley also sold parcels of his land, but only to other Black people. Soon Oklahoma got the reputation as the place to go to be free and prosper. The discovery of oil made Tulsa a boomtown. But statehood and powerful whites brought Jim Crow laws and Blacks were pushed into a very small area of about thirty-five blocks. Here’s the ‘way out of no way part.’ Black businesses flourished. As the people were confined, so was the money! Doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, bankers, builders, bakers, restaurateurs, hoteliers, numbers runners, and theater owners. Cooperation and community co-opted competition – eleven thousand strong.

But whiteness and white supremacy were threatened. The impertinence of these ‘uppity’ Black people who



not only did not know their place but had the temerity to be more prosperous than some of their so-called ‘betters,’ engendered envy and anger. On May 31, 1921, Dick Rowland, a young shoeshine boy was accused of assaulting a white girl in downtown Tulsa. A lynch mob gathered to protect white womanhood. A survivor of Greenwood descendants, Regina Goodwin says, armed Black veterans from World War I attempted to stop the mob, a white man tried to take a gun from a Black man, “...a shot was fired, and all hell broke loose. It was a war on the Greenwood community.” According to Program Coordinator of the Greenwood Culture Center, Michelle Brown-Burdex, “the sheriff deputized five hundred white men who were joined by thousands of white rioters.” The fighting progressed into the Greenwood neighborhood where armed Black men in strategic locations defended their community. A descendant of the Greenwood massacre, J. Kavin Ross, spoke of a World War I veteran who “brought back a Gatling gun from the war and fired upon mobsters” as they entered Greenwood.

Whites regrouped and at 5 a.m. on June 1st, “a mob stormed Greenwood Avenue, entering buildings... looting and burning them,” said Victor Luckerson, author of *Built By Fire*. This was about more than Dick Rowland. Charges against him were dropped. This was about a ground and air attack on a community, massacring its people, and liquidating its wealth – a loss

of about twenty-seven million in today’s dollars. It is estimated that six thousand were arrested, one thousand homes and three hundred businesses were burned, and about three hundred people were murdered. Ten thousand were left homeless. Eldoris McCondichi, massacre survivor says, “I was awakened by my mother and I was very frightened. Bullets were raining down over us. She said we have to go out, get out. The white people are killing the colored people.” When the smoke cleared, some Greenwood residents stayed to rebuild, others left – never to return.

Tulsa may be the most well-known, but it was not the only Black Wall Street. Prosperous Black communities existed in several other U.S. cities: Sweet Auburn in Atlanta, Bronzeville in Chicago, Hayti in Durham, North Carolina, Farish Street in Jackson, Mississippi, and West Ninth Street in Little Rock, Arkansas.

So why don’t you know more about this part of our history? Black people did not talk about it. Some were afraid of repercussions by the government or the police. Angela Davis’ theory is that “there is a fear connected to giving voice to something. Black people remained silent because they did not want the next generation to undergo the same violence.”

During their heyday, these Black Wall Streets thrived because people worked together and supported each other. Their dollars circulated among their own. Let’s take a lesson from that.

(Quotes from “The Legacy of Black Wall Street documentary”)



Pioneering Leadership: Washington's trio of Black mayors shine in Black History Month

In a historic moment for Washington State, the current landscape proudly boasts three African-American mayors, a testament to the progress and strides made in promoting diversity and representation in local governance. This remarkable achievement signals a departure from the historical underrepresentation of Black leaders in political spheres. The presence of these mayors not only marks a significant milestone in the state's political history but also serves as a crucial step towards fostering inclusivity, breaking barriers, and ensuring that the diverse voices of the community are heard and represented in positions of leadership.

Bruce Harrell

Bruce Allen Harrell, born on October 10, 1958, is the 57th and current mayor of Seattle, Washington. Before his mayoral role, he served on the Seattle City Council from 2008 to 2020, including a term as council president from 2016 to 2020. Acting as mayor briefly in 2017, he was elected as mayor in his own right in the 2021 Seattle mayoral election, making history as the city's first African-Asian American mayor.



Harrell acknowledges the diverse challenges facing Seattle, from the pandemic to housing crises, safety issues, and climate change. In his leadership, he emphasizes hard work, collaboration, and Seattle's innovative spirit. As mayor, Harrell is committed to creating a local government that serves residents with care, competence, and compassion. He calls for unity around common values and shared priorities, expressing confidence in the collective power to make positive changes.

Victoria Woodards

Victoria R. Woodards, born on July 16, 1965, is the 39th mayor of Tacoma, Washington, known for her impactful political career. Formerly a seven-year at-large member of the Tacoma City Council, Woodards championed equity and human rights, establishing the city's Office of Equity and Human Rights and serving as president of the Tacoma Urban League. Elected in 2017 and securing a second term in 2021, she leads with a commitment to progressive initiatives. Woodards also plays a key role in the United States Conference of Mayors, serves as vice-chair of the Committee on Jobs, Education, and the Workforce, and in 2022 was elected president of the National League of Cities, showcasing her influence in municipal governance on a broader scale.



Dontae Payne

Dontae Payne, Mayor of Olympia, Washington, took office on January 1, 2024, after winning the nonpartisan election on November 7, 2023. A U.S. Army veteran with two tours in Afghanistan, Payne holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a Master of Public Administration, and is affiliated with the Democratic Party. With a background as a staffer in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Washington State Office of the Governor, he showcases leadership and problem-solving skills. As a Government Relations professional, Payne excels in managing records, maintaining confidentiality, and effectively engaging with constituents. His unwavering commitment to positive change positions him as a dedicated leader shaping Olympia's future.



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>