



JUMP BUTTONS. CLICK ON PHOTO TO GO TO:
ABOUT BLIND CLEANING
LEE OWENS
HOME

THE EBONY CACTUS magazine

Vol. 2. No. 8

May 6, 2003

A New Perspective on Business

On the Wings of History

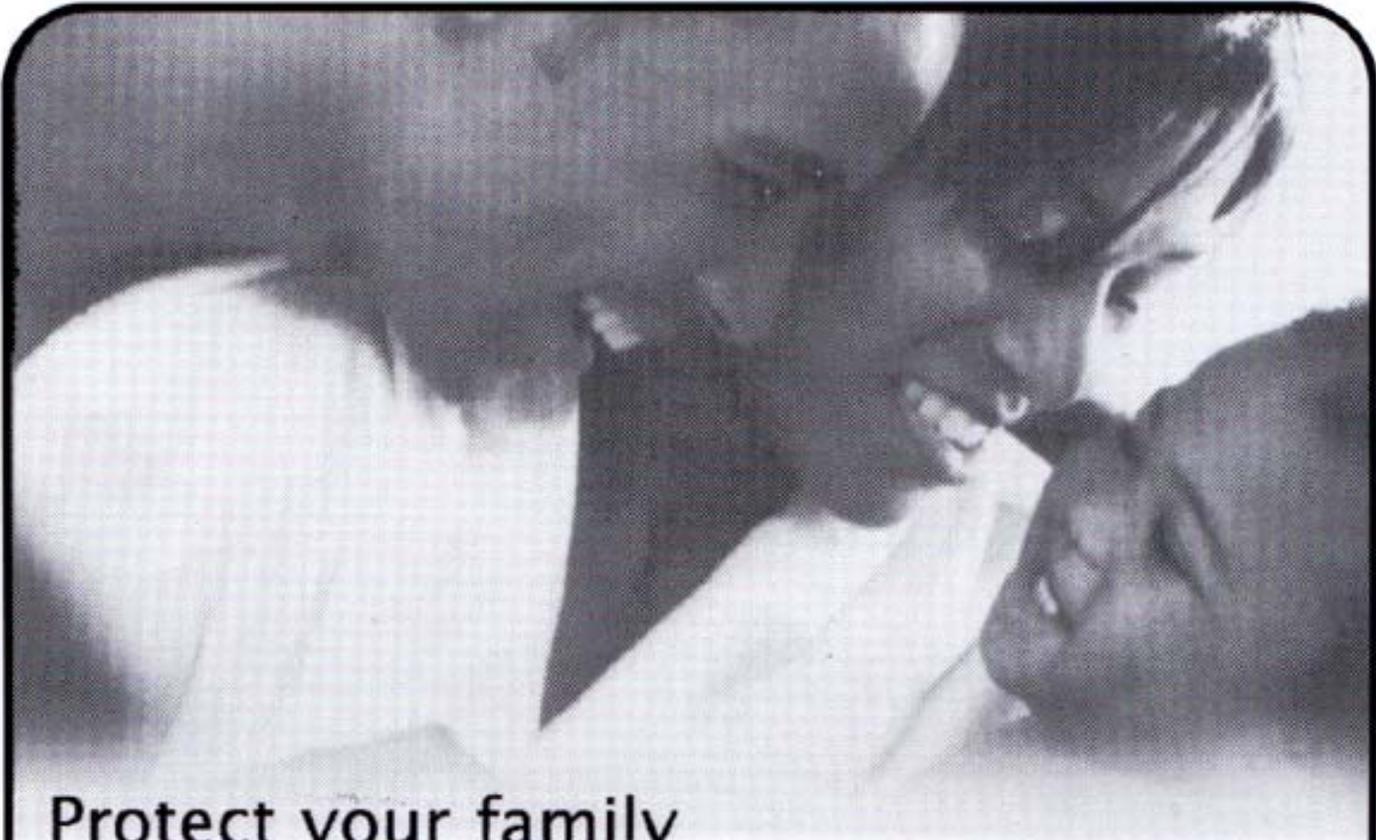
Cover Story: Captain Lee Owens to solo around the world

Inside:

Greater Phoenix Black Chamber of Commerce Spotlight on "About Blind Cleaning"

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Greater Phoenix Black Chamber of Commerce Member Spotlight: Periodically we are pleased to feature outstanding members of the Greater Phoenix Black Chamber of Commerce. Owned by Jim and Mary Thomas, Almost Blind Cleaning is a unique firm providing a unique service, the cleaning of blinds, furniture and chandeliers. In business since 1995 they have grown from start-up to earning over \$250,000 dollars annually with a crew of 5. **Pg 9**



Lee Owens is a man on a mission. His goal is to fly solo around the world in a replica of a P 51 Mustang WWII fighter. This is no easy feat. To do so, he must circumnavigate the globe, face highly variable weather and even cross the Atlantic non stop. To be successful in his quest to honor the Tuskegee Airman requires the ability to plan well, faith, courage and audacity, all things he has in abundance. The one other critical ingredient however, is enough money. But he is nearing that goal as well. A story worth reading. **Pg 11**

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The Greater Phoenix Black Chamber of Commerce

The GPBCC exists to facilitate the economic empowerment of the Greater Phoenix Black community and our Chamber members through the promotion of entrepreneurship on a variety of levels, including but not limited to:



- Offering leadership and advocacy in efforts regarding economic, political and social issues
- Facilitating relationships between Chamber members, existing Black-owned businesses; and the Greater Phoenix corporate community
- Attracting local, national, and international business opportunities for Black-owned enterprises
- Educating our membership in the most current productive, and efficient business practices
- Assisting whenever possible in the cultivation of fledgling Black-owned enterprises
- Acting as a clearinghouse for information, opportunity and dialog

On a regular basis we will spotlight a member of the Chamber on these pages and on our web page at www.phoenixblackchamber.com. Come and take a look at how we are working for you.

Sincerely,
Cody Williams
President/CEO

Contributing Writer: Donna Tucker Pg 14



As owner of the three CareerPRO Résumé Center offices in Arizona, Donna is dedicated to providing quality presentations guaranteed to get results. She began writing résumés with the American Résumé Service, a national company, in 1988 back before PCS. Never known as a typing expert, she became a cut-and-paste artist.

Donna has a bachelor's degree in journalism and participates in continuing education through the Professional Association of Résumé Writers, the National Résumé Writers Association, the Professional Résumé Writing & Research Association and the Résumé Writers Council of Arizona.

In addition to her résumé clients, many local businesses, such as transNET Media and Coza Technologies, rely on her writing skills for business presentations and communications. She brings professionalism to everything she does. She may be contacted at www.4greatresumes.com - jobsaz@att.net

Angienuity

Corporate Vassal or Entrepreneur

by Angela Miller-Brooks

If a little tree grows in the shade of a larger tree; it will die small - Senegal Epigram

According to Biz Stats.com, a statistical compilation and information company, there are over 17 million sole proprietorships in the United States to date. To add, these businesses bring in some nine million dollars plus in receivables.

How does this happen especially during the current economic downturn? I think it happens via good ole' fashioned vision and desire. These people ask the hard questions of themselves in relation to business decisions that must be made. Also, they keep their noses to the grindstone. Sole proprietorships, partnerships and various other entrepreneur launched corporations all began with a vision. Some were even triggered with the simple idea that they could service America's business community with a distinctive quality not found in corporations. Ironically and much like myself, many sole proprietors learned the ropes while in the employ of a Chase Manhattan, Citi Bank, Lands-End, Black Enterprise or government entity.

Tiptoeing around executive clad walls (ears cupped for a scoop naturally) and buffered by the umbrella of a prominent company can lead to long and lucrative employment guarantees. Unequivocally, I'd be the first to clamor how wonderful corporate life can be. As my Generation Y daughters might so effectively put it, "Corporate life with all its perks is off the chain!" Along with those perks that you've come to know, love and expect, your able to learn those very important undocumented ropes. Likewise, many have the privilege of being mentored (unfortunately, for many years there was no one like myself at the Fortune 500 company I was employed with who could take me under her/his wing) by some nineteen ninety recession survivor executive. Now that's an editorial all by itself. At any rate, my point here is that the corporate life meal ticket can be hard to wash away when there's no refreshing beverage near.

For many, the decision to stay on as a corporate person or leave in search of the great entrepreneurial experience is a hard one to make. I've been preaching the "it's your thing; do what you want to do" for years now. Only today and after a discussion with a group of 40 something business women, was I deeply and sincerely understanding of the fact that everyone doesn't want to go it alone. And I heard my mother in the background. To each his own. Dream Big!

Living in America

A New Kind of Economy

by George B. Brooks, Jr. Ph.D

As in 1991, the billions spent on the war do not, so far, seem to be trickling down to the economy at large. Thus, with unemployment at an eight year high, things are bleak for a lot of people. However, there are more and more individuals that seem to be part Jamaican in their ability to successfully hold more than one job. More interestingly, an increasing number of these second and third jobs are of the job holders own creation. Micro-businesses created to take advantage of some skill the owner has that can be of service to others. These services are exchanged for pay as well for barter. There appears to be an intricate web of micro-business relationships forming to fill the vacuum left by the lost of major institutional employment opportunities.

In function, these micro-businesses act much like sites on the world wide web. Each adds functionality to the overall economy without the services having to be centralized in large institutions. Supply and demand works to control prices and competition works to encourage improved quality. Seemingly, a perfect capitalist model.

On the surface, this is nothing new. Local economies such as this, have existed for thousands of years. Since the last recession however, there as been one dramatic change, the World Wide Web. Before, the service reach of these small businesses was limited by the distances word of their services could travel. The larger the business, the greater the marketing reach, which added to the forces encouraging consolidation. Today, a small business can market world wide for an investment of only \$100 a month. This world wide reach significantly decreases the need for consolidation but increases the need for cooperation and integration. Economy of scope takes the place of economy of scale to reduce operational costs. Thus, this new economic model demonstrates characteristics to satisfy both the right and left but is yet something apart from both. This "apartness" has strong implications for American politics, particularly for the upcoming presidential election. I will discuss this next time. Enough for now. On with the show.



Editorials

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GOVERNOR NAPOLITANO APPOINTS AFRICAN AMERICANS

Since January 2003, more than 50 individuals of African American heritage have been appointed to Arizona boards and Commissions

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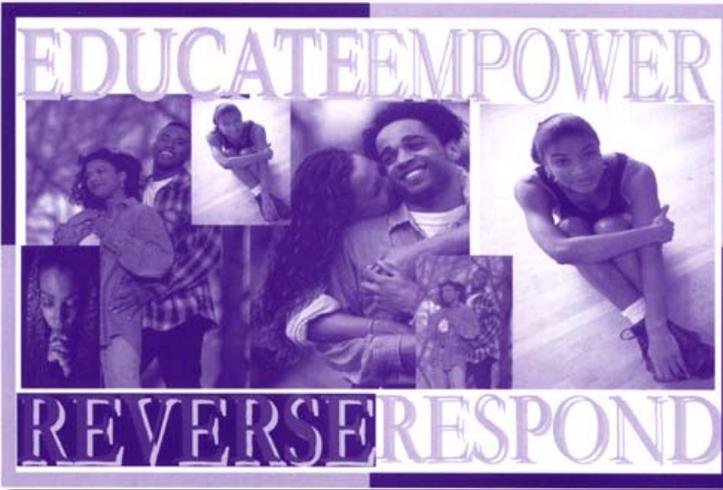
Arizona's new Governor, Janet Napolitano has been proactive in her appointments of African Americans to various boards and commissions. We thought we'd take a moment to congratulate her on her actions and those who have won seats:

Bishop Henry Barnwell
Ginger Bealer
Gabriel Beechum-Gonzales
William Bell
Mary Black
Harrison Blackwell
Gene Blue
Roderick Bolden
George B. Brooks, Jr. Ph.D
Clovis Campbell Jr.
Ray Clark
Nicole Davis
Sandra Duke-Lowe
George Dean
Lynette Evans
Byron Garrett
Calvin Goode
Larry Grant
Mel Hannah
Andrea Hardin
Debbie Harris
Lyda Harris
Gwendolyn Hatcher
George Hill
Herschella Horton
Harold Hurtt

Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women
State Parks Board
Interim Director of the Department of Economic Security
Child Protective Services (CPS) Advisory Commission
Parents Commission on Substance Abuse
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
State Board of Appraisal
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Citizens Financial Review Commission
Deputy General Counsel
Commission to Prevent Violence Against Women
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Regulatory Affairs Policy Advisor
State Schools Readiness Board
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Maricopa County Superior Court
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Governor's African-American Advisory Council
Parents Commission on Substance Abuse
State Board of Personnel
Nominating Committee for the Commission on the Appellate Court
Chief of Legislative Services, Department of Economic Security
Chief of Phoenix Police Department & commission to Prevent Violence Against Women

News continued on next page

Sistas Tackle Devastating Disparities, Hold Forum



The Sistas of Planned Parenthood of Central and Northern Arizona (The Sistas of PPCNA) are on a mission. Chaired by Tina Brown - PPCNA African American Outreach Manager, it is comprised of over a dozen women professionals, community activists and leaders. Brown said, "One of my jobs is to be involved in the community. Fairly quickly, I was approached by women who wanted to assist other African American sistas. They expressed concerns about those who were not making the best decisions when it came to their responsibilities and ideas in regards to sex. The feeling to make a difference was strong. The need was obviously there, so we got together and made it happen. All titles are left at the door within this group. We work quite harmoniously to make things happen."

- Arizona's Teen pregnancy and birth rates are now the third highest in the nation.
- On any given day in Arizona 39 teenage girls will become pregnant. More than 70%, some younger than 14, will go on to give birth.

To combat these unsavory issues, Brown and the Sistas have devised a platform entitled Respectin' and Protectin' Yourself: A Forum on Healthy Sexuality for the African American

Community. Two goals of the Respectin' and Protectin' Yourself Forum are: to raise the awareness among Arizona's Black community leaders, services organizations, schools, clergy and the general population about the negative reproductive and sexual health trends that plague our community and to strengthen existing collaborative efforts and nurture new partnerships between PPCNA and the Black community

Clay Dix, Arizona State University Social Work Professor will be the moderator. Atlanta's Benita Harris, Special Projects Coordinator of the CDC- Atlanta will be on hand as well. The forum, will be at the ASU Downtown Center 502 E. Monroe in Phoenix on May 12, 2003. A 5:00 PM networking session will precede the 6:00 PM forum. Space is limited. RSVP to tbrown@ppcna.org.

The Forum is a collaboration between the Sistas of PPCNA, APS, ASU and Arizona African American Health Information Systems (AAHIS). Founded in 1916, Planned Parenthood is the world's oldest and largest family planning organization.



Sistas United

Clockwise from back row left side:

- Chauna Cox
- Alexus Rhone
- Tracee Hall
- Tina Brown

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News

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NAMC *National Association of Minority Contractors*

34th Annual National Conference

June 25-28, 2003

Hyatt Regency Hotel

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

(474) 270-6068



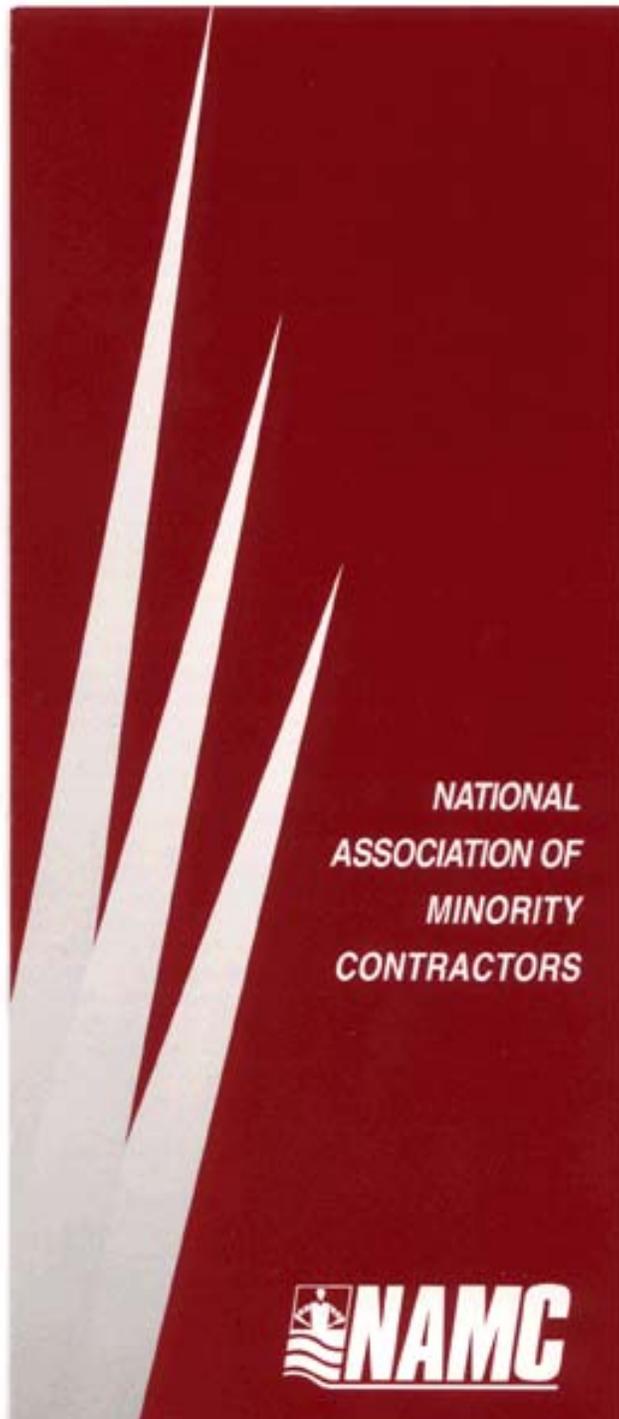
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Meeting schedules subject to change. Check at the website for the most up-to-date information



NATIONAL
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MINORITY
CONTRACTORS





Greater
Phoenix
Black Chamber
of Commerce
Spotlight



About Blind Cleaning Inc.

Phoenix , Arizona

Organization: About Blind Cleaning Inc.
Type of Business: Corporation
President: Jim Thomas
Vice President: Mary Thomas
Location: 2808 E. Sunnyside Drive Phoenix Arizona 85028
Website: www.blindcleaningarizona.com
Telephone: 602-370-1021
602-923-4932 fax
E-mail: abwcleaning@qwest.net
Year Established 1995
Number of employees: 5
Annual Revenues: \$250,000

Description: We are a blind cleaning service using ultrasound. We take the blinds down and put them in our tank where they are electronically cleaned and restored back to their original look, providing that they are not too sun damaged. When we clean the blinds, they are demagnetized so that they stay dust free for approximately six months.

Services offered: We can clean screens, restoring them. We are the only company in the Valley that can do that. We clean window and blinds. We also clean draperies, furniture, and crystal chandeliers. we can detail a house in eight hours depending on the work required.

Our prices are based on square footage and what needs to be cleaned. We tend to be more expensive than our competitors due to the quality of work we do, as well as that also carry the necessary memberships and bonds. Word is spreading that we are the best in town.

Motivation: I started this business because I was working in quality control in at a video duplication company. I saw a video where a gentleman was selling the machines to clean blinds. I had been living in Arizona since 1972 and had never seen any one clean blinds before or promote cleaning blinds. After reviewing the video I decided one day I was going to start this service.

What finally inspired me was my wife to be. I was a book salesman at that time. One day while I was doing paperwork my, to be wife came by and asked what was I going to do with the rest of my life. I told her about the cleaning opportunity. After she looked at the information she said that we can do it.

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About Blind Cleaning Inc.



We? She explained that she had years of experience in office management and I was a good salesman. After further research we started the business.

Start Up Challenges: First, it took \$30,000 to \$35,000 to start out, including getting your machine, truck, chemicals and tools to work with. Secondly, though there were a lot of people around with blinds, it was difficult to get them to use our services. I had to knock on a lot of doors. I did a lot of advertising which did not pay off. What has really paid off has been knocking on doors and word of mouth. The advertising did not work because a customer usually does not think of our services until they look up and see the blinds are dirty, then they go to the yellow pages to find a service.

Breakthrough opportunity: What really broke it was when we had one call from an apartment complex over in Chandler AZ. That guy had seen my truck. He called us in to do his apartment complex for about 6 months. When ever someone moved out, we were there to clean the blinds. That ended when new management took over the complex and took out the cloth blinds we were cleaning and put in vertical blinds to be cleaned by their own crew. Never the less, we got great referrals from that job.

One thing I learned in my experience and training in sales was that if you do a good job, always ask for a testimony. I have a lot of testimonies for clients I have serviced. So when I go to see a new customer, I show my testimonies. These documents have helped open up a lot of doors for us. They help relax the customer and demonstrate my qualifications to do the job.

Clientele/Market: Higher income customers use our services mostly. People who have Hunter-Douglas blinds and other high end lines. Those who make over \$50,000 per year. Word spreads about us through referral, word of mouth and the Yellow Pages. It is important to get listed properly in the Yellow Pages. At first we were listed under window cleaning. It took some discussion to get us listed under blinds so that our customers could find us.

Non-Profit Profile

Glendale , Arizona

Organization:
The Lee Owens
Foundation Program

Type of Business:
Non- Profit Aviation
Foundation

CEO:
Lee Owens

Location:
Glendale, Arizona

Website:
www.leeowensflight.com

Experience:
Over 30 years

Education:
Graduate Southern Illinois
University
Aviation Management

Program Director:
Ron Edwards

Mailing Address:
1700 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, Az. 85016

Telephone:
623-521-4879
(Dubl Dutch Events)

E-mail:
edwards22@aol.com

Certification:
ATP rated (the highest
rating you can achieve)



Purpose: My goal is to make a solo flight around the world in a P51 Mustang. The reason for this flight is to honor and continue the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen. They demonstrated something never at the time seen before. The airmen accomplished great feats as service men during World War II and are the greatest fighter group in the history of the United States Air Force.

Foundation: The Lee Owens Flight Foundation is a 501c3 non profit organization. All the contributions received for the flight will go to it's cause.

Background: I am the Chief Pilot and Instructor for Glendale Aviation, Glendale Arizona. The plane I've chosen to fly is a three-quarter sized P-51D Mustang World War II aircraft. This will be a courageous and historic flight. It is with great honor that I embark upon this endeavor. Part of the plan is to successfully recreate Charles Lindbergh's flight as an African American. The trip around the world will also be in commemoration of the famed Tuskegee Airmen and the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brother's flight .

Challenges: Funding, fuel and weather are my prime obstacles. Frankly, it'll take a half million dollars to make the trip. While flying, I'll be confronted with Arctic air that can be pretty brutal even in June. Freezing level is 1 to 10 degrees C. Below that at minus 40 to 50 celsius, the plane won't freeze. I'll need to stop to refuel several times during my journey and fuel is nearly five dollars a gallon in Europe. Each leg of the flight is 1200 miles.

The purpose of the flight is to continue the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen. They demonstrated something never at the time seen before.

Lee Owens

by
Angela
Miller-Brooks

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My flight will break several records. One, there's never been an African American to fly solo around the world.

Lee Owens

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Aircraft: The aircraft is a three quarter (3/4) scale P-51D Mustang, a World War II fighter roughly 42 inches across (cockpit). With a take off weight of 2,000 pounds, it's single engine will be capable of lifting 4,500 pounds. Even with modern aviation and navigation equipment, I'll still face the same dangers Lindbergh faced back in 1927.

Preparation: I work out everyday and watch my weight. I'll have to be in the right frame of mind and will need to train myself to stay acutely awake for the long flight. To help me I have 3 crew members Larry McConnell; builder and owner of my RV-8 training plane (kit designed by Vans Aircraft), Ron Edwards; ground crewman/ media liaison and Bob O'Connell; European liaison.

Motivation: I've flown in the United States and in Europe extensively. Now, the job is in connecting the two. I'm motivated by a need to make a mark on the lives of young folks. I'd like for people to know my passionate for flying. When I was taking flying lessons and things got really tough, I used the legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen as my motivation. They fought odds when people didn't want to help them learn how to fly.

Competition: I'm not the only person seeking to make a statement in aviation this year. A German gentlemen is seeking to fly the same type of plane but, his is a home built and is also 3/4 scale. He's seeking the endurance record. My objective is simply to finish.

Historical Aspect: My flight will break several records. For example, there's never been an African American to fly solo around the world. Secondly, there's never been a non commercial P-51D to fly around the world and third, it will break a distance record of 25,000 miles.



RedTail P-51 Mustang as flown by the Tuskegee Airmen in WWII



The RV-8 Training aircraft built by Larry McConnell of Phoenix Arizona

Planned Flight: Lincoln Ragsdale was a highly respected African American Businessman and Community Leader in Phoenix. He was also a Tuskegee Airman. We'll leave the Lincoln Ragsdale Executive Terminal at Phoenix's Sky Harbor Airport on June 19, 2003 (This date is the celebrated time when African Americans in the Southwest received word of their freedom).

Owens continued on page 19



**Phoenix Rental Car Center
Contractor Outreach Meeting**

The City of Phoenix Aviation Department will soon construct a Consolidated Rental Car Center, which will house all of the car rental operations for the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

Potential subcontractors, suppliers, minorities, women and small business companies are encourage to attend, learn about the project and network with one another. Staff will discuss the scope of the project, deadlines and e M/W/SBE certification process.

Wednesday, May 7, 2003 - 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Phoenix Airport Marriot Hotel

1101 N. 44Th Street, Phoenix, 85008

RSVP by May 5th, 2003 to Cheryl Baron at 602-324-7760 Ext 21 or
cherylbaron@phoenix-abacus.com



SAVE THE DATE

**Congressman J.D. Hayworth
Minority Business Summit
May 30th, 2003**

**Salt River Pima-Maricopa Community Center
1880 North Longmore Rd.
(Scottsdale Area)
1:00pm-5:00pm**

101 North or 101 South to McDowell
East to Longmore Rd. Left on Longmore
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DON'T BUMBLE YOUR BRANDING!

offered by Donna Tucker of CareerPRO
Résumé Center, Phoenix

Since when, as an employee, do you need a career brand? Well ... since the job market has become tighter and pink-slips are as common as confetti, that's when! What are the benefits to having a good, strong brand? A brand will ...

- Bring you new opportunities faster
- Make others aware of your expertise
- Guide you in your career decisions about what training to pursue and what opportunities to accept
- Create in the employer's mind a compulsion to buy (hire) you
- Differentiate you from your competition
- Elevate you from the status of a commodity (in commodities, lowest price wins)

In career marketing, a brand can be defined as: A cohesive image that positions you as a trusted expert, attracts your ideal employer/client, and conveys the value of investing in your talents/services.

Here are seven simple "A's" to creating a clear and compelling brand.

1. Authentic Image: Your brand should be founded on authenticity. It should be about who you are, what your work-life purpose is, and what you are committed to causing. As a starting point to develop your brand, brainstorm a list of all the things you are good at. As examples, here are some ideas for brands: conflict management, sales training, best-practice systems, marketing for service professionals, customer service, etc.

2. Ardor: (Okay, so ardor isn't all that common a word, but it fits with this list of "A's"). Ardor is another word for passion. Using the brainstormed list from step 1 above, circle those items you are most passionate about. For starters, identify the #1 item (ultimately, your brand can be a 3-point brand, provided each of the points complements the others). If you're having difficulty narrowing it down, pretend you are packing your suitcase for an important business trip. If you had room to take just one item (brand) with you in that suitcase, what would it be?

3. Advantages: Once you've identified the top pick from item #1, identify what the advantages are to that item. For instance, if you are great at conflict management, the advantages to recipients (employers) of your brand might be greater cooperation among team members which leads to enhanced productivity, new ideas, less employee turnover, etc. List at least 3 distinct advantages for your brand.

www.TheEbonyCactus.com

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4. Analysis: Next, do some analysis to determine what the market conditions are for your emerging brand. Is there a need for what you offer? Are companies hiring in that area? Are there a zillion competitors for what you want to do? If the answers to these questions are negative, go back to step 2 and select a new item.

5. Approach: Once you've determined your passionate competency and the market demand, you can begin to determine the best approach for positioning your brand. Think unique positioning. Be a St. (pronounced "Saint"), as in the beST, firST, or moST. Are you the best at creating product marketing strategies, are you the first one to have mastered how to conduct electronic meetings for your work team, are you the most accomplished, award-winning sales professional in your company/industry?

6. Articulate: Once you've assembled your brand, you must be able to articulate it to others. Networking opportunities, both internal and external, abound. Be ready with a sound bite that describes your unique brand. Such as "the career cartographer-I am able to help others chart the right course that will make smooth sailing in their work lives" or "the change commando-drawing from a decorated military career, I am able to bring about change that delivers off-the-chart results."

7. Awareness: Alan Weiss, internationally known consultant and author, states that a brand is "an awareness factor." Above all, look for opportunities to make the right people aware of your brand. Get on the radar screen. The best brand in the world is useless unless people are aware of it. Initiate an orchestrated campaign to "brandish" your brand. You can do this by writing articles, speaking at association meetings, requesting to work on high-profile projects, serving on projects where you'll be seen by a number of people (i.e., handing out name tags at a trade show meeting), cc-ing your boss's boss on significant emails/memos, suggesting time-saving/money-saving ideas to your immediate employer, etc.

Throughout this 7-step process, remember to look for opportunities to deliver your brand. In doing so, you'll bring value, benefits, and advantages to those you serve. END

It's Showtime In Tucson

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The Tucson Black Chamber of Commerce
in commemorating our...
9Th Anniversary Celebration

Performing Live

- *Joe Bourne
- *Barbara Williams
- *Haji Ahkaba
- *Ron Clayton
- *Kingdom Kids
- *Mel Rivers
- *Grace Temple Praise Dancers
- *Q-Ball Express
- *Billy T.
- *Toni Ham

106 Tucson Tucson
KGMG
Mem 106.3

The Doubletree Hotel - Reid Park
445 S. Alvernon Way
Tucson, Az

Friday, May 16th, 2003
6:00pm - 11:00pm
Adults \$50 - Youth \$40


growing together

Design by
 Miriam Castro-Haqq
www.soundandpictures.net

For information contact the Tucson Black Chamber of Commerce 520-623-0099

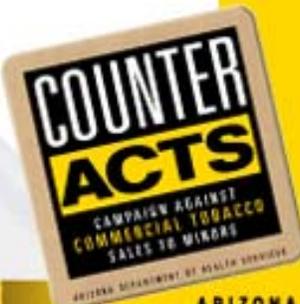
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**MY PEOPLE.
MY PRIDE.
MY CAUSE.**

The CounterActs prevention patch is a symbol of commitment to our youth.

If current patterns continue in the United States, an estimated 1.6 million African Americans under the age of 18 will become regular smokers. The number one killer in the African American community is tobacco-related disease.



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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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Publishing

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When new customers call, we ask how they heard about us. Since January of this year, more and more have heard of us from the Web. We also use the World Wide Web to educate our potential customers about our company. That is where they see our qualifications after we give them a quote.

Customer Needs: If a person has a lot of allergies, they call us. The blinds carry a lot of dust and dust mites. Mini-blinds need to be cleaned once a year. However, cloth blinds due to the expense, are usually only cleaned once every 4 to 5 years. Restoring the blinds back to the original look also fulfills a need.

Certifications: The company that certified us is called on-site certification. They train people to clean Hunter-Douglas blinds. We also carry a two million dollar bond. We are certified with the Cities of Phoenix and Tucson and in Maricopa County to clean their blinds (Certification program under Title 49 part 23 of the code of the Federal Regulations).

Memberships: We belong to the International Window Cleaning Association, Arizona Business Alliance, the Greater Phoenix Black Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce. These memberships have been useful in obtaining work. For example, the Black Chamber received a call from the State of Arizona relating to blind sales. Their recommendation of us lead to a large job for the State in Coolidge AZ. That job has now lead to more work.

Business Philosophy: Have a good attitude. Be very very positive and totally believe in yourself, that you can accomplish anything that you want. Be the best.

Last Words: I saw an opportunity, I took a hold of it and I went forward. I knew I had a winner and I decided that I was going to be the best and I never let color stop me. Most importantly I have a wife who believed in me.

Owens continued from page 12

Our next destination will be Republic Field in New York and again from there we'll make the same flight Lindbergh made across the Atlantic to Paris in 1927.

After Paris I'll fly on to St Johns, Newfoundland due East to Paris, France, then SouthEast to Sicily Air base in Italy and over Angio Beach. From there I'll head back to Berlin. I will

then fly just over 1,500 miles to Moscow, down to Stalingrad and up the coastline to the Bering Sea. I'll coast in over Nome, Alaska, Utah and land in Dayton, Ohio on July 11, 2003.

Initial Funding: The initial funding came from some various business men, friends and students. Early investors thought well enough of the idea to contribute \$100,000 to get the project underway. Originally, I was writing endorsement letters to little or no avail. I will admit it has been a little disappointing. Some of the responses I've received said that they didn't give to individuals. A bit of light came when the Mayor of Avondale, Arizona contacted me. He was taken with the idea and has helped with various resources. Remarkably, no one is reaching out, to date, with any incredible acts of financial kindness. However, that isn't where our only source of funding. We've determined that if 5,000 individuals donate just fifty dollars that would suffice our journey's needs. Church groups, social organization (Fraternities, Sororities, Elks, etc.) can donate as well. Contributions are tax deductible. I would hope people would feel it is a worthwhile cause.

Marketing strategy: A this point we'd like to get on national talk show like Oprah and Tom Joyner. Both shows have mass cross appeal and are heard or seen by a number of people everyday. I've contracted with a great public relations and events company - Dubl Dutch Events, LLC. They're handling all the public relations and assisting with foundation donations and contributions.

Key Message: This is history in the making. I know what Lindbergh felt like when he said, "WE" will be making the flight for I feel the same way. We will make the flight together.

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Letters

Peace my beloved sister and brother.

Just wanted to say THANK YOU for the incredible article on the Rites of Passage Program. The picture of the girls was beautiful and the article generated a lot of calls from the public about the program. You did a wonderful job describing the essence of what Rites of Passage is all about.

I truly appreciate your support and all that you do to inform our community on the many resources available to them.

Peace and blessings.

Fatimah Halim

LEGAL

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