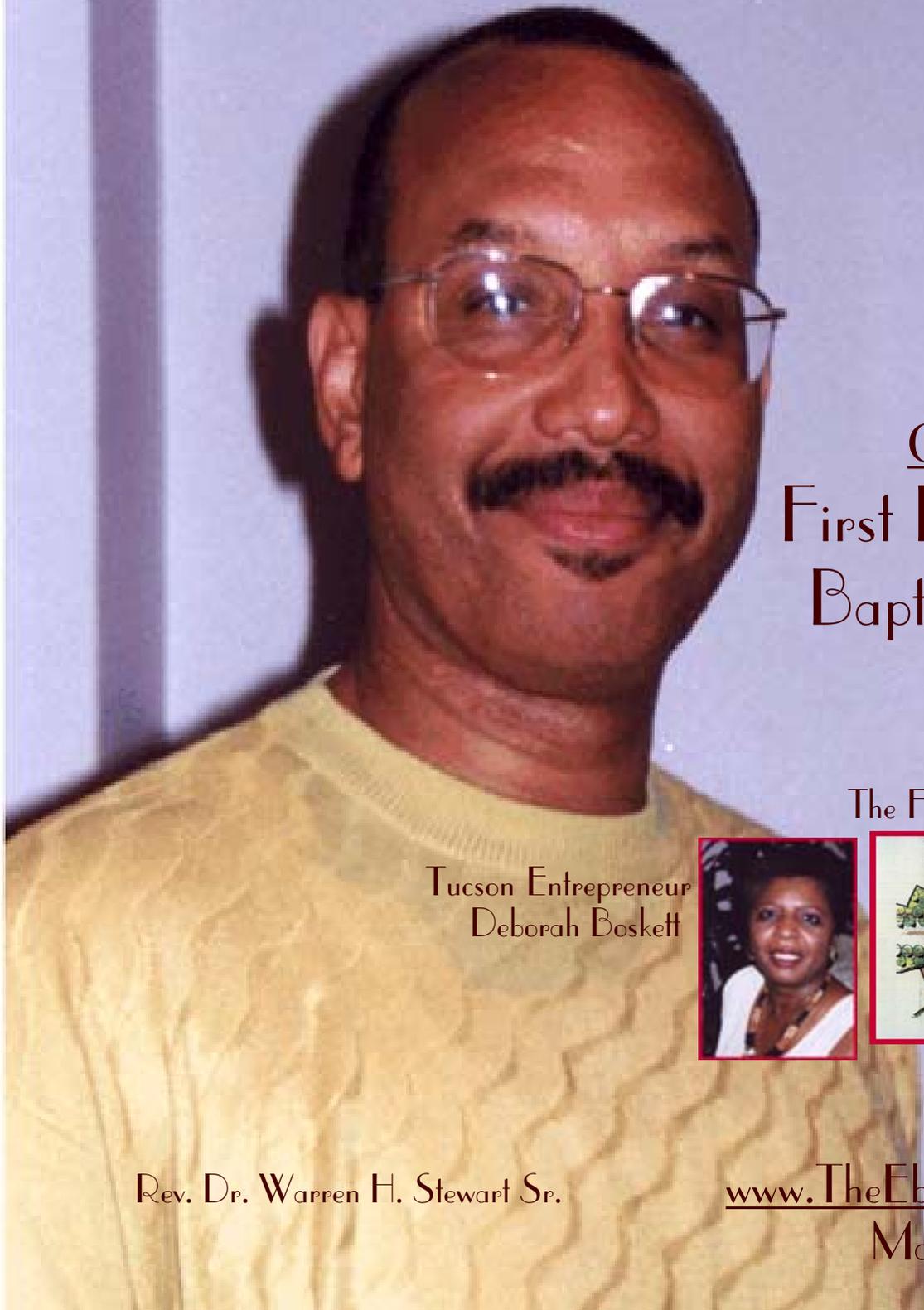


THE EBONY CACTUS magazine

Vol. 1. No. 7 September 23rd, 2002

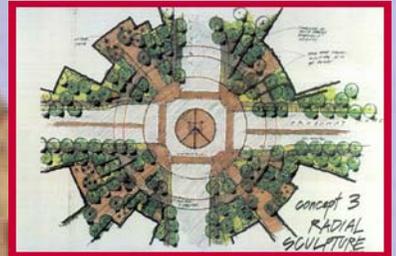
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Issue 7

Welcome to the seventh edition of The Ebony Cactus magazine. This issue we profile two entrepreneurs and one business and in honor of their 97th anniversary and their pastor's 25 anniversary, First Institutional Baptist Church. This brings the grand total of showcased organizations to 39 in 22 different categories. As promised, this is our second issue for the month of September. You will note that it is a bit smaller than previous issues. That was part of the idea of going semi-monthly, to give you more information each month, but in smaller individual doses. You will also notice the evolution in the format, and color scheme, and the refinement in the tone of the articles. Your comments back to us have been invaluable in giving you a better document.

Our list of guest lectures continues to grow. This month we welcome Gail Knight, the Executive Director of the South Phoenix Village Community Excellence Project. Her topic is the Four Corners Development project located within South Mountain Village.

Using the Hyperlinks

The hyperlinks embedded within the Ebony Cactus are open. Your ability to use them is dependent on how your individual system is configured. If you open a copy of the Cactus directly from the internet, on some systems the hyperlinks will not work until you save the document on the desktop and re-open from there. On most systems however, the hyperlinks work directly without any additional manipulation of the document. We recommend the use of the latest versions of browsers and Adobe Acrobat software for best results.

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Well, we can't be much more clear than that, you should advertise in the Ebony Cactus Magazine (TEC). If you own a business, you should advertise in TEC. If you are seeking to reach new customers, you should advertise in TEC. If your school needs students, you should advertise in TEC. If you are seeking new highly skilled employees, you should advertise in TEC. The list goes on but the message is clear, you should advertise in The Ebony Cactus.

Spread The Word!!!

The Ebony Cactus magazine presents information that can aid you in being a better employee or employer. It showcases service providers that can help your company do business. It builds bridges between those who have the services and those who need them. So to this end, we ask you to SPREAD THE WEALTH. Let other folks know about the Cactus. Send them a copy. We are now in the "Idea Economy" and the more knowledge that is shared, the better off we all are.



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Inside

How to receive the Ebony Cactus magazine	3
Legal	3
Making it Happen	5
Staff	6
Table of Contents	6
Editorials	7
Angienuity	
Living in America	
TEC-Ed	8
Risk Takers by: Angela Miller-Brooks	9
Enterprise Zone by: Angela Miller-Brooks	10
Church Business by: George B. Brooks, Jr.	12
Coming Attractions	
Special guest lecturer: Gail Knight	14
Why Advertise in the Ebony Cactus	18
Index of Profiles	19
Index of Advertisers	20

A few weeks ago, my daughter and I were discussing the differences in the leisure activities between African Americans who reside in the southwest and those who live down South. Hands down we agreed that the most relaxing activity in Arizona simply had to be swimming. I looked at her she then looked back at me. Was she thinking the same thing I was thinking? Simultaneously, we burst with sounds of gurgled laughter and said Black people down south don't swim. Now, I do have to tell you that its been over 13 years since I've lived in the south (Bluff City - Memphis, Tn.), and I am sure many things have changed since I was last there. As a matter of fact, I know that it has. A recent issue of a major Black magazine highlights Memphis as part of the New South, a Mecca for trade and the exchange of information in this New Economy. If this is so, then Black folk (figuratively speaking) must be swimming by now, and apparently they are doing it quite well.

I now pose these questions to you Arizona; when will our change come? Are we using what very well may be the most powerful invention of our generation, the Internet? Or are we waiting to read about it in the next edition of our grandchildren's World Book Encyclopedia? When will we leverage the wealth of information now at our fingertips? When will we make the splash and learn to ride the waves?

In my opinion, this is a good time to do business, especially through the Internet. Yes, I recognize the fact that last year's unbelievable terrorists events brought the country death, despair and tragedy. But, we have risen again and must not be detoured from the magnificence of peace and prosperity.

If ever a blessing was laid in our laps from up above, the Internet is it. The Internet enables the leveraging and gaining of business that is unmeasurable. Its growth is constant. It is a mammoth development that has not yet been completely harnessed. Its links extend to the ends of the earth. How can you still stand by in the desert and not get wet? Enter now and swim as if you were a child from Atlantis. Enjoy!



The other day I had the privilege of speaking before a class of young entrepreneurs at South Mountain Community College. I had the chance to discuss the Ebony Cactus, our history and to some degree, how we do things. I suggested to the students that if you build a better mouse trap, the world will beat a path to your door as long as you market it correctly and keep your accounting straight. We believe The Ebony Cactus magazine is such a mouse trap

What is a "better mouse trap" or BMT? It is a mouse trap that by implication, does a better job at catching mice. Just what is The Ebony Cactus magazine? It is a business magazine that uses the Internet as its preferred method of distribution. Ok, so what makes it a BMT? Firstly, the articles within TEC (the Ebony Cactus) seek to provide timely business tips and general business knowledge. This information comes directly from people who, like you, are building their business and from managers and experts experienced in specific areas. The "Coming Attractions" and "How to do business with" sections give a "heads up" on projects you should know about and could possibly participate in. Secondly, every issue of TEC adds to a growing library of detailed information on a wide variety of Black owned business. In TEC, you get a half page of details about what the businesses do, what products to they offer, how long they have been in business and a history on how they have made their businesses work. Thirdly, this information is useful and beneficial. In TEC you get the nuances of how others are succeeding which may help you succeed in the future. Your library of Black Business could guide you to some one with a product or service you need. Finally, there is free access to this information from anywhere in the world via the World Wide Web.

With seven issues, more than 84,000 copies distributed (est), 39 profiles, more than 110,000 words written, and an increase from one to two issues per month; some would say we have achieved. But, just what have we accomplished? Not enough. There remains hundreds of businesses you need to know about, thousands more business and success tips we can provide to help you prosper. Just keep reading and most importantly, write us and tell us what you need to know. As suggested by the Rev. Dr. Warren Stewart later in this issue, we are here to serve. Enough for now, on with the show.

Tinisha Loring 2002-2003 CLDP President

Under the stewardship of its founder Mr. Hubert Ross, the Career Leadership Development Program (CLDP) is back in full swing. It is a three-year internship program for outstanding achievers where they learn how to run meetings, how to do public speaking, how to work as a team and they get introduced to non-traditional careers. The program follows the traditional academic school year from September to may. The newly elected president for this school year is Tinisha Loring.

"Good academic credentials are important to me" says Tinisha. "They have benefitted me in the past and present, and will help me in the future. As a sophomore at Tempe High School, Tempe, Arizona, I concentrate highly on personal achievement. In addition, I am involved in youth programs at my church. CLDP is unique because it encourages students by exposing them to innovative experiences. I'm focused and busy. As a student, I maintain a B or better grade point average (GPA) by being consistent in asking important questions in class and studying. Achieving good grades has a positive effect on my confidence and self esteem. To do well in my studies and on community activities are very important to me."

Tinisha's career goal is to become an architect and to own her own business. Some of her achievements include the "Doing the Right Thing" award from the Greater Phoenix Urban League, The Stacey D. Cantley Citizenship, Most Improved Intern Award and the Best Professional Image Award from the Career Leadership

Development Program, and from her school the Perfect Attendance and the Academic Improvement Awards.

"The program is in good hands with Tinisha Loring" stated Ross. "I remember her being a quiet and consistent student two years ago. Now she is intelligently vocal in articulating her viewpoints. She has a commanding presence that will serve her well in the future".

The CLDP is now in its 22nd year and is seeking to enroll 7th through 10th graders. Mr. Ross emphasizes however, "One thing program currently needs is more boys to be involved. At the present time it is at least 98% girls". Additional criteria for acceptance include good citizenship, a "B" or better grade point average, a desire to learn and the student must have parental support. For more information call Mr. Hubert Ross at 480-461-6226.

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Risk Takers

By Angela Miller-Brooks

Name: Rosiland Moore, MBA
Business: Moore System Works
Title: CEO
Location: 3801 North 24th Street
Phoenix, Arizona
Telephone: 602-212-0200
Facsimile: 602-212-0953
Type of Business: Accounting Services
Year Established: 1995
Employees:
2001/2002 Revenues: Undisclosed

Description: Moore System Works is an accounting and computer services company. We help both small and large corporations.

Background: My background is in banking. After college I landed a job as a loan officer and became very involved with small business finance. I studied accounting in college. I didn't like it, but I felt that I should take advantage of the opportunity the class offered. I figured every business in America needed an accountant, so I made the best of it. Later, I became a Stock Broker for a couple of years which enabled me to see how businesses really work.

Startup: I started as a home based business and had only a few small business clients. I did bookkeeping and taxes at that time and I was on call at any hour of the day or night when there was a problem. I was committed then as I am now.



Name: Deborah Boskett
Business: D & S Custom Creations
Title: Interior Budget Decorator
Location: Tucson, Arizona
Telephone: 520-574-4337
Facsimile: 520-574-4337
E-mail: dscustoms@aol.com
Type of Business: Interior Design
Employees: None
2001/2002 Revenues: Undisclosed
Webpage: www.aztucson.com/dscustoms

Description: D and S Custom Creations is a unique interior design company. D and S specializes in helping clients with distinctive design ideas for the home or office.

Background: I learned from my mother how to help others with little to nothing in the way of materials. I am very creative and have an eye for seeing things most others can't even imagine. I'm licensed and have good references which is really important. Having a positive and researchable history is critical in this type of business. I use vendors and don't have any employees.



Moore continued on page 16

Boskett continued on page 18

The Athlete's Foot

Business Name: The Athlete's Foot
Title: Franchise Owner/
President, EKC, LLC
Location: 4157 Thunderbird
Road
Phoenix, Arizona
85053
Telephone: 602-564-0993
Mobile: 623-680-9372
Facsimile: 602-863-7979
Type of Business: Franchise Athletic
Wear
Year Established: 2002
Employees: 4
2002
Revenues: \$500,000 (projected)

Description: The Athlete's Foot is a franchise retail store. We specialize in athletic footwear, socks and apparel. Our corporate office is based out of Atlanta, Georgia. There are approximately 700 stores worldwide. The Athlete's Foot (established in 1972) is popular in the southern states and states located in the east. The Phoenix market is not very aware of our stores. There are two other stores in town which are located further southeast. My goal is to take over this side of town (north valley).

Branding: Branding is important. I researched and found that Athlete's Foot had a good reputation. They had name appeal and business longevity. I felt comfortable with associating myself with the company.

Business Plan: Exemplary credit was a must for me. One of the things my wife and I take great pride in is that we have great credit. So, when it came down to the credit checks for acquiring this franchise (and they were extensive), I knew my credit would shine. Aside from having great credit, my main goal was to find a good location. A location in a strip mall, like the one I'm in now, with an anchor is the ideal.

Marketing: I do a lot of my own marketing. I'm out quite a bit. Also, I meet with my vendors, who are all local, regularly to discuss trends and the availability of popular stock items. Although we've only been open for a few months, we've experienced a lot of repeat business. We sell all of the major brands; Nike, Addidas, Reebok and we're convenient to the customers. That makes me really happy.

Clientele: My clientele varies. Being next door to the gym, I'm getting customers from high school kids to seniors. When we opened the store we thought it would be a technical store; specializing in runners, walkers and cross- trainers. What we're finding out is that we are turning into more of an urban store.

Motivation: One of the things I did was get my new employees a membership to the gym next door. Also, every three months I give them a pair of shoes and they have their choice of brand and style. I feel that as a business owner I should show my employees how much I appreciate their hard work and dedication. The free shoes and gym membership are just a couple of ways I can do that.

Athlete's continued on page 17

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Phone: 602-258-1998

Dr. Warren H. Stewart, Sr.
Senior Pastor

Rising from the ashes of the Huhukam civilization, Phoenix is a young city at 121 years. In 1905, missionary John B. Bell arrived in this oasis in the desert and united the congregation that would become what is known today as First Institutional Baptist Church.

Since 1977, the Senior Pastor of FIBC has been the Rev. Dr. Warren H. Stewart Sr. Called at but 25 years of age, Pastor Stewart united a then fractious congregation and provided the spiritual, administrative and business leadership to grow the church to over 3,000 members today with an annual budget exceeding 2 million dollars.

Church Business continued on page 13



Broadway House

FIBC Continued from page 12

This month First Institutional Baptist Church (FIBC) celebrates its 97th year and the 25th year of the leadership of its pastor. Excellent overview articles on what FIBC does and has achieved have been published in both the Arizona Informant and the Arizona Republic. Beyond the “what” however, there is also a “how”, and that story, at least in part, follows.

In summary, how FIBC makes things happen is through its outreach. Organized under the Church are 70 to 80 separate ministries which see to the spiritual needs of the congregation and “doing various things toward bringing the kingdom of God on Earth” according to Pastor Stewart. There are also two subsidiary non-profit cooperations, Broadway House apartments and FIBCO (Facilitating Independence & Building Comprehensive Opportunities) Family Services. FIBCO is an independent non-profit agency dedicated to extending the good works of the church to all in need.

FIBCO Family Services

The underlying theme of FIBC’s outreach activities is self-sufficiency. Directed by the Rev. Karen Curry, the mission of FIBCO is “To meet the needs of our community by providing resources and knowledge to assist individuals and families in becoming self-sustaining”. To achieve this goal, FIBCO focuses on the following programs:

- Faith Works for Families
- Job Readiness/Placement
- The Ujima Project
- Homeless Recovery
- Housing

The Samaritan House

Named from the parable of the Good Samaritan, the goal of Samaritan House is to assist individuals in securing short-term and eventually long term housing. The Samaritan House is a triplex (three fully furnished two bedroom apartments) in Phoenix where a small number of families can for a nominal fee, stay up to 90 days while seeking more permanent accommodations. Since the program was established over 10 years ago, dozens of families have been assisted.

The Ujima House

Ujima (which means collective responsibility) House is a home for unwed teenage mothers. Often these girls have been kicked out of the house and have nowhere to go but the street. On hiatus at this time, when the program is reinitiated, Ujima House will be able to house up to 4 girls and their babies. The vision of the project is to support teenage girls and their babies for up to one year and to provide a wholesome and nurturing environment for mother and child. There, the teens can continue their education and work toward self-sufficiency. Located in northwest Phoenix, the program is housed in the former parsonage. Referred by collaborating social service agencies, over a year’s time period, 4 to 8 young ladies may be assisted.

FIBC continued on page 16

FOUR CORNERS PROJECT UNDERWAY



The Four Corners project area is located at the intersection of 24th Street and Broadway Road and overlaps two established Redevelopment areas—South Phoenix Village and Target Area B. The eastern portion of the project area is located in the South Phoenix Village NIA/Redevelopment Area established in 1989. The western portion of the project area is located in the Target Area B Redevelopment Area established in 1978. Extensive revitalization activities have been occurring in these redevelopment areas including blight elimination, housing rehabilitation, new in-fill housing construction, code enforcement, neighborhood capacity building, economic development and infrastructure improvements.

In 1999, the South Mountain Implementation Plan was adopted by the City Council. The Plan identifies redevelopment of the Four Corners as a primary objective. A variety of activities have occurred to implement this strategy. Design guidelines and a zoning overlay were created to assure quality development.

Conceptual streetscape designs have been developed for 24th Street and Broadway Road to complement the proposed development. Planning is underway for a multi-use trail along the east side of 24th Street. Acquisition and clearance of affected properties is underway to accommodate the redevelopment project. These activities have occurred in partnership with property owners and community residents.

The common vision is for the Four Corners to become a vibrant, multicultural commercial “gateway” complemented by community based institutional uses. The initial phase will be the institutional development on the southeast quadrant of the intersection. This development will include a new bond-funded Neighborhood Resource Center. The Community Excellence Project is located on the site and plans are also underway to renovate and expand the existing facility to provide a multicultural and recreational venue for youth and families in South Phoenix Village.

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Gail Knight is the Executive Director of the South Phoenix Village Community Excellence Project. President of the National Council of Negro Women (Phoenix Chapter), she has over 30 years of experience in the public and private sector with a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Organizational Development. She was awarded the “2001 Women of Wonder Award” for the significant impact that her work has had on community life. Recently, she was profiled in the Arizona Republic for her efforts as a community activist agent of change within the Phoenix metropolitan community. In spite of many awards and accomplishments she praises God for her greatest points of pride: husband Leonard, and their three children Rosslyn, Steven and Saleemah.

4 Corners cont. on page 15

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4 Corners continued from page 14



South East Corner Conceptual Plan

The City of Phoenix currently owns 23 parcels in the development site and is in the process of acquiring the remaining 14 parcels. The redevelopment strategy will include abandoning an existing street and alley and assembling the entire block. The Board of Directors for Community Excellence Project who are also residents of South Phoenix Village and members of the Target Area B Citizen Advisory Committee have been the leaders of this effort and have received overwhelming support for the Four Corners project.

The Four Corners Project will be accomplished in partnership with the continued participation of citizen advisory committees, property and local business owners. Community meetings are scheduled for September through November 2002 to discuss this exciting development. The City of Phoenix has posted a sign on the Southeast Corner announcing the future Neighborhood Resource Center to be built on this site. A Request For Proposal will be issued by the City to implement the institutional element of the project. Assistance from the City of Phoenix to promote quality development includes land assemblage, cost write-downs, expedited plan review, infrastructure improvements and other assistance that is necessary and appropriate. Qualified developers will be secured to redevelop the southeast quadrant of the Four Corners Project area.

Interested individuals should contact Gail Knight, Executive Director, Community Excellence Project at (602)243-0680 or Maria Bears-Pendleton, City of Phoenix, Neighborhood Services Department at (602)495-0807.

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Moore continued from page 9

Networking: I've really put myself out there. You have to go all out to make your name known. But, I've some wonderful mentors. Gail Knight, Executive Director of Community Excellence Project and a former boss, pointed me in the right direction. I also have some tremendous mentors who are executives with some of the major corporations in town. A former roommate, who's about four people under the Chairman of the Board at American Express, gave me some very helpful advice. I'm very blessed to have had such great help and insight along the way.

Best Practice: As a practice, Moore System Works is much more willing to go the extra mile for its clients. I think that is what differentiates us from other companies. Sure, we get paid for our services but, its not always about the money. We want to see our clients succeed.

Value: Every client receives much more than their paying for, by far. The idea is to leverage the information that's shared with each client. In return, the best that I could ask for would be a referral. I'd like to be able to do a good job for each client and hope that they would tell another which would bring in more business. A referral is the highest complement for a job well done.

Mentorship: I have identified the Arizona 100 List (A competitive list of businesses based upon their customer responses). My focus is to identify one those companies from the list who offer something similar to what I offer and approach them for an opportunity to mentor me. Also, I've submitted an application for selection in the APS Management Training Program. One of the great things about the APS program is that business people are matched with someone who'll hold your hand through some of the scenarios that we all go through as we're trying to grow our businesses. Growth in business is important.

Breakthrough opportunity: I am currently working with a \$25 billion a year organization which during tax season lends a tremendous opportunity for my company.

Moore continued on page 17

FIBC continued from page 13

The Job Readiness/Placement Program

The multi-faceted Job Readiness/Placement Program provides customized training programs to help individuals to compete in today's job market. Services provided include:

- Job/Career Counseling
- Personal Career Development
- Soft-skill Development
- Job Training
- Job Placement
- Post-employment Follow-up

Faith Works for Families

The Faith Works for Families Program identifies families who are in need of assistance in becoming self-sustaining. Through an interview and application process, the families needs are assessed and they provided the necessary services which include:

- Family and Individual Counseling
- Mentoring
- Support Groups
- Job Readiness Training
- Career development
- Child Care

Education

The purpose of the Educational Program is to assist individuals in achieving their career goals. This includes direct scholarships and information regarding other scholarships. Annual Fellowships are offered to first-time African American teachers who choose to teach in inner-city schools.

Funding

Currently the majority of funding for FIBCO comes from FIBC at a level of about \$100,000. However, FIBCO is a developing a track record of success which will eventually allow access to funding from a wider variety of sources including grants and charitable contributions.

Broadway House

Located at 2101 East Broadway, Broadway house according to Pastor Stewart "is one of the most successful low income housing projects in the Valley (Phoenix metropolitan area)". When Stewart arrived in Phoenix, that property was in foreclosure. Stewart saw the opportunity and asked to take it over. He managed it personally for a number of months until a management agency was found. Today, the property is a clean and wholesome and houses a "Neighborhood Network Center" a full computer commons for the resident's children complete with internet and digital scanners. Funded by a federal drug elimination grant "there is a service coordinator on-site working with the kids and residents so they don't just have a place to stay but they have a community" says Pastor Stewart. The subsidized 80 unit complex houses approximately 120. Pastor Stewart serves as Chairman of the Board.

FIBC continued on page 17

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Athlete's continued from page 10

Startup: I've been in sports all my life. My sport of choice is basketball. Before I became a franchise owner, I was an employee with IBM. I was so burned out. I had the talent to succeed at that job, but the motivation just wasn't there. Finally, and through the encouragement of others, I went for it and its been great.

Options: As a franchise owner I did have options. For instance, the company enabled me to choose from certain store models and specifications that worked best for me. I chose an open look so that when customers enter, they don't feel threatened or intimidated.

Plan: I have a five-year goal and expect to own 5 to 7 stores by then. I plan to connect more with the Black community through community organizations like the Black Chamber of Commerce.

Buy In: To dream of owning a franchise business is easy, the rest is work. The first thing that should be done is to decide what type of franchise to go into because there are a lot of them. Then, there is the financial aspect (a royalty fee) that has to be dealt with. Inspectors are just a part of the process so they're to be expected. The most important part is hiring a good mix of people.

Moore continued from page 16

Locality: As far as this location, its been a tremendous boost for business. When I send out mailers or place a call about Moore System Works, organizations identify with me. I'm located near the Biltmore area which speaks to other companies as to how well my business is doing. Early on, I felt that I should be downtown because that's where the action is. I've been connected with downtown since the beginning of my career. But, this is a wonderful location. Space is normally not available and when there was an opportunity to move in, I took it.

Employee Motivation: Currently, I have an Arizona State University student working in the office as an intern. Incorporating college students works well for me. I try to give my people challenging and meaningful assignments as an incentive to motivate. My company also offers a very competitive rate. Typically we're on the higher end of what my competitors are offering in the way of pay.

FIBC continued from page 16

Expansion Programs

Over the past 10 or so years the Church has undergone significant expansion. A projected eight million dollar program, four million has been utilized with four million to go. The first phase was the "Body Building". Completed in 1991, the three story educational and administrative building houses 23 classrooms, the Church's administrative offices, library and social services. Phase 2, was the acquisition of the property

west of the Church. Phase 3, was the renovation of the Worship Center which was completed in 1999. This was all done with cash, debt free, raised through tithes and offerings and the generous contribution of others. Phase 4, is the "Hope Center" which will include a gym-auditorium, classrooms, social service offices and it will also house the A.A.C.T.S., program which is an African American Christian Training School for primary through high school. The Hope Center will cost about 4.2 million of which 1.5 million has been raised.

Pastor as CEO

To manage an organization like FIBC, Stewart has had to serve not only as the pastor to the congregation, but also as the CEO of a vertically integrated corporation. According to Stewart, the secret of success is "Servant Leadership". "I am not here to be served, but to serve the Kingdom of God through serving others. My job is to instill that theology if you will, in the hearts and minds of the congregation; that we are not here to be served, but to serve. I would hope that if my leadership here was summed up it would say that he was a servant".

Procurement

To provide services and needed materials and equipment, an impartial procurement procedure has been established. Vendors wishing to provide goods and services to the Church and/or its subsidiary corporations should contact Mr. Brandon Chappell.

Future

In 2005, First Institutional will reach its 100th year. Pastor Stewart admits that he has not had much time to consider this fact. However, he states that if God allows him to be here at that time, "it is going to be one hallelujah of a celebration". I believe him.



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Here is why you should advertise in The Ebony Cactus. Primarily, the Cactus is designed to connect you with your desired customers.

- 1. Demographics:** Part of the mission of The Ebony Cactus magazine is to showcase African American businesses to all who could use their services. The magazine's format is simple, open and easy to read. The content is focused on people and issues that will be both interesting and valuable to both small and large business. In this case, small business people include both those who's full time occupation is their business and those who may have a full time job, but work their own businesses on the side. These are large demographics. Free access to the magazine via the internet also works to increase the number of eyes viewing the magazine.
- 2. Capacity Building:** To "Build Capacity" is to increase a business' ability to do more and to overcome barriers to its growth. One way to accomplish this goal, is to build synergistic relationships with other successful firms and/or workers in an industry segment. The Ebony Cactus is a source of timely and comprehensive information about what African American businesses are doing and what services they offer. This information will give you the data you need to increase the capacity of your business and improve your ability to grow.
- 3. Building Bridges:** The Ebony Cactus is read by increasing numbers of companies seeking outsourcers, contractors and partners. Their readership further enhance your opportunities for growth.
- 4. A New Application of Established Technologies:** Unlike a web based Ezine, The Ebony Cactus does not dwell on the net. Instead, like any print magazine, is sent directly to the reader. There it resides on their computer desktop just as a newspaper would reside on the reader's kitchen table. From there the magazine can be read at any time. Macintosh and P.C. users can view it equally well. If so desired, copies can be made by the reader for their personal use. Add to this the ability to hyperlink (weblink) directly from the magazine. Now the direct link to your website can travel with The Ebony Cactus wherever it goes.

The Ebony Cactus magazine is a powerful source of potent information for small and large businesses alike. We encourage you to use this service and allow us to help your business grow. If you would like to know more, drop us a line at: publisher@TheEbonyCactus.com. Let us help you Make It Happen!

Boskett continued from page 9

Networking: My networking and advertising is basically word of mouth. I recently completed a job for a client and he sent me two referrals almost immediately.

Clientele: The bulk of my clients have eclectic tastes. However, I've noticed that over the past months the majority of my color schemes are leaning toward the ethnic look. D and S not only serves clients here in Arizona but, we've had clients from northern and southern United States as well as from the east coast. The surprising fact about my clientele is that I hardly have any African Americans.

Value: We work within the budget of the client and we're realistic. Its not my intention to drive them into debt. People have approached me with the hopes of developing a room based on a televised program implying that a room can be designed for a few hundred dollars. I tell them sure, they can do it for \$500 or so but, they won't like it. To that end I tell clients that about 90 percent of the things they'll need to decorate they already have. What we do is work around what exists by accessorizing. If there is a need for furniture, the thing to do is make a big ticket purchase like a sofa that can stand the test of time, then work around it.

Staging: I'd like to get back to more "staging" for quick home sales which is what I did back east. For those selling their homes, what I can do for them is help them set their home much like a model home in preparation for sale. Its really something unique.

Research: I do my homework, but I'm not alone in doing so. I encourage clients to jump in there with me. I feel the more client involvement the better. It gives them true ownership and allows them to appreciate the work that goes into interior design.

Locality: Because I live in the southwest, my service abilities have not been dampened. Through my website, I can be contacted from virtually anywhere. For potential client convenience, we've installed an appointments page. There, we can be contacted at the leisure of the person interested in our services. It's an extremely basic page where as much or as little information can be detailed about client needs. Also, I tele-commute. I've walked clients from start to finish by way of the telephone and a fax machine. When your as detailed as I am you can do that without a hitch.

Client Relationship: I am a tranquil person. I try to set the stage when meeting with clients. I treat them like my friends because that's what they are. I'm not an uptight person. I don't deal in formalities. They are necessary in some cases but, with me none of that is needed. When designing or coming up with a concept design, the client should be at peace. Because, when its all over, they have to feel happy with what's been created. I'm happy for them but, they have to live with the changes that have been made.

Index of Profiles

Accounting:

Moore System Works Vol.1 #7 Pg. 9

Architecture:

ABJ3 . Vol.1 #1 Pg.13

Art Sales:

Personal Preference Inc. Vol.1 #5 Pg. 9

Agriculture/Horticulture:

Plant Chow Products Vol.1 #3 Pg. 17
RightTrac Inc. Vol.1 #6 Pg. 12

Authors:

Mark Crockett Vol.1 #5 Pg. 14
Sonny Harper Vol.1 #5 Pg. 9

Beauty and Hair:

Hair and Body Works Vol.1 #4 Pg. 16

Catering:

LAS Catering Vol.1 #6 Pg. 9

Cleaning Services:

RCD Cleaning Vol.1 #6 Pg. 15

Clothing:

Athlete's Foot Vol.1 #7 Pg. 10
T-Rock Inc. Vol.1 #1 Pg. 14

Commercial Contractors:

Simmons Quality Painting Inc. Vol.1 #2 Pg. 15

Entertainment:

Love Lee Entertainment, LLC Vol.1 #2 Pg. 10
New Dawn Production Vol.1 #5 Pg. 14
Phoenix Arts and
Entertainment Radio Vol.1 #3 Pg. 10
Pub Magazine Vol.1 #4 Pg. 13
Scratches a motion picture Vol.1 #3 Pg. 10

Event Planning

EnStyle Planned Events Vol.1 #6 Pg. 9

Greek Letter Organizations

Kappa Alpha Psi Vol.1 #4 Pg. 13

Health and Fitness:

Heel to Toe Vol.1 #4 Pg. 8
John Allen's Arizona Body
Sculpturing Vol.1 #3 Pg. 16
Uzone Vol.1 #2 Pg. 17

Human Resources

Solar Human Resources Vol.1 #4 Pg. 8

Information Technology

Cummings Computer Systems. Vol.1 #1 Pg. 13
Evermist Technology Vol.1 #4 Pg. 17
KomputerEd Tools Vol.1 #1 Pg. 13

Interior Design:

D & S Custom Creations Vol.1 #7 Pg. 9

Motivational/Public Speaking:

Pride, Poise and Pursuit Vol.1 #2 Pg. 11

Not for Profit:

Girl Scouts Vol.1 #5 Pg. 11
Imani's Child Vol.1 #3 Pg. 14
Tucson Black Chamber of
Commerce Vol.1 #1 Pg. 11

Photography:

Celebrity Photography Vol.1 #2 Pg. 10

Real Estate

REMAX Fine Properties Vol.1 #5 Pg. 13

Religious Institutions:

First Institutional Baptist Vol.1 #7 Pg. 12
Southminster Presbyterian Vol.1 #4 Pg. 11

Telecommunications:

SMQT Long-Distance Vol.1. #3 Pg. 11

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Index of Advertisers

Az. Association of Black Journalists	15
Balaros	11
Berry Realty	8
C & C Auto License	11
C-Thang Catering	4
Conner Collection	11
Crescent Research	11
Esquire Barber & Beauty Salon	4
Forever Beautiful Beauty Salon	4
Fosheezy	4
George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center	20
Lawrence Dabney Professional Services	11
Life Strategies Consulting	4
Longaberger	5
Miracles Salon	20
Primamerica: Kevin Brown	11
SMQT Long Distance	11
State Farm Insurance: Lula Smith agent	11
Taylor Made Promotions	17
Wendell "Mac" McRae, Sr.	4



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