



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Charter 2020 - 2021

Background

In June of 2020, The WDM Chamber of Commerce developed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee to better understand and serve the needs of our diverse community. This project was initiated to recognize and support our minority business enterprises, deliver Chamber programming and resources and an amplified voice in the community to help them succeed. This includes all diverse groups such as Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Women Business Owners, LGBTQ, Veteran-owned, and more. Three years ago, Nitch.com named West Des Moines the most diverse suburban city in Iowa and in 2020 they named West Des Moines the most diverse suburban city in the Greater Des Moines Area.

Data and Statistics

The number of businesses in our minority communities continues to grow, adding to our city's competitive advantage. Over the last 10 years, in America, minority business enterprises accounted for more than 50 percent of the two million new businesses started in the United States and created nearly five million jobs. There are now more than four million minority-owned companies in the United States, with annual sales totaling close to \$700 billion. Yet, despite that growth, there is still a disparity when it comes to access to capital, contracting opportunities and other entrepreneurial development opportunities for minority-owned firms.

In 2019 survey data from the Federal Reserve details that the median income of a White family has a net worth 10 times more than that of a Black family. We can do our part to help change this disparity. And, according to 2019 U.S. Census Bureau data, West Des Moines population estimates are 67,899 residents of which 7.6% are Asian, 6% are Hispanic, 4.1% are Black or African American, .1% are Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and .1% are American Indian or Alaska Native, 2.5% are two or more races, 3,092 are Veterans. Additional stats can be found here <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/westdesmoinescityiowa/PST045219>

Obviously, while the numbers of minority-owned businesses are a source of optimism and hold promise for the future, much more still needs to be done to encourage and strengthen the minority business community. That's why ensuring that these minority-owned businesses have access to contracts, access to capital and the technical and marketing assistance needed for success is a top priority for the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce' Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Diversity is one of the nation's greatest strengths, and diverse small-business ownership is essential to our City's continued economic success and growth.

WDM Chamber DEI Committee Goals:

- 1) - **Annual fundraiser** to benefit social justice/minority organizations / goal of \$8,500+ raised
- 2) - **Increase minority business membership** / goal of 40 new members by Dec 31, 2021
- 3) - Host first annual **Black & Brown Business Summit** / goal of \$50,000 net to help with DEI programming
- 4) - Actively support A **Diverse Board of Directors** within the WDM Chamber
- 5) - Highlight and **promote minority businesses** to help them succeed and grow their business
- 6) - **Weave diverse voices within all WDM Chamber programming**, events, speakers, attendees, and more
- 7) - Be known as the **City that embraces diversity and actively assist minority-owned businesses**
- 8) - Develop programming including the **Supplier Diversity Matchmaking Event** and others that fill unique needs
- 9) - Spotlight minority-owned and operated companies all year long and during **Diversity Week** April 12 - 18, 2021
- 10) - Continue to round out the **DEI resources** on the WDM Chamber page to make sure the information is up to date and most relevant to the community at <https://wdmchamber.org/diversity-equity-inclusion/>
- 11) - **Remain non-partisan** as an organization

Key Stakeholders:

Committee Chair	Angela Jackson
Committee Vice Chair	Terrence Thames

DEI Committee Members: For a full and current list, click here:

<https://members.wdmchamber.org/groups/GroupRoster/dei-committee-38>

Key Project Milestones 2020-2021:

- 1) **“We Heart Diverse Iowa” & “We Heart Diverse West Des Moines” Fundraiser benefiting NAACP Iowa Chapter and Jewels Academy.** Through the merchandise sales of T-shirts, Window Clings, and Wall Plaques, the WDM Chamber DEI Committee will donate 100% of the net proceeds to these two meaningful organizations that are helping to make positive change in our state. **Start Date: June 2020 End Date: Total Donation:**
- 2) **Membership in the WDM Chamber** within minority business owners currently is at 18 joined since 2020.
- 3) **Black & Brown Business Summit 2021.** On April 22-23, the WDM Chamber DEI Committee will produce and host a nationwide business summit that will include top speakers from around the world, key tools and information for small to large businesses and inspirational programming that will help provide our state’s Black & Brown Business with knowledge they can use to set their path for success. The event will be professionally telecasted nationwide, and we want to involve as many Black & Brown businesses as possible to attend. The goals of the Summit are to: Help **elevate ethnic minorities & BIPOC businesses**; Provide **valuable programming** including **national speakers** that includes vital information; Share **key resources, education** and **connections** to help minorities start and grow their businesses; Highlight a job well done through the **Mel Essex Award**; Spotlight BIPOC businesses through a **vendor fair during diversity week and summit**; Provide training to businesses through the **Pitch Competition and Awards**...and much more!