



**5** YEARS OF **IMPACT**

**MBBA**

MICHIGAN BLACK BUSINESS ALLIANCE

## ONCE UPON A TIME IN DETROIT

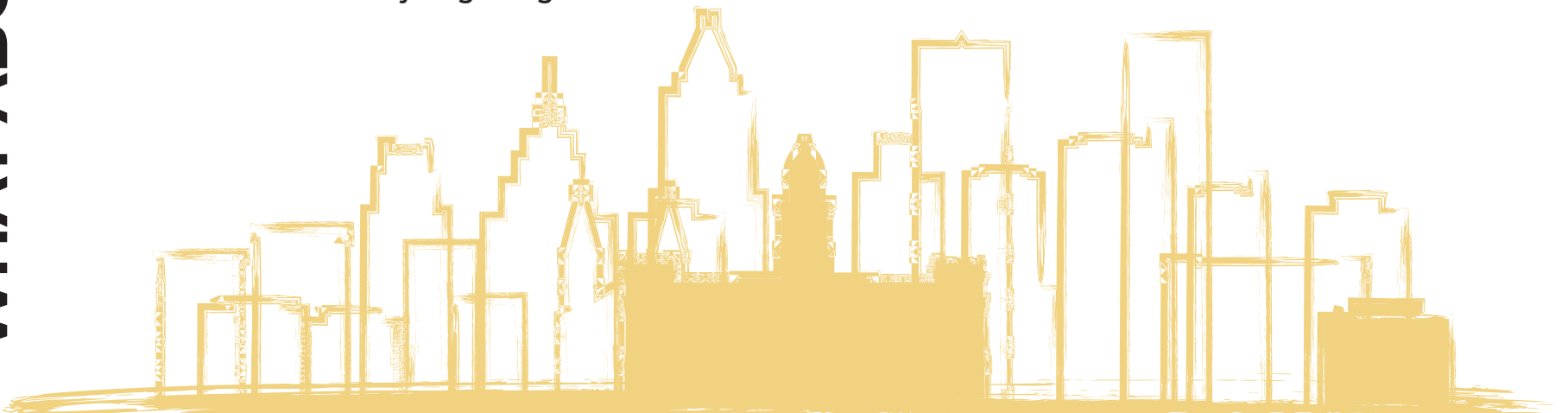
Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, employing nearly half of Michigan’s workforce. But too often, we are the least heard in the rooms where decisions are made. The Michigan Black Business Alliance exists to change that. We are unapologetic about our mission to close the racial wealth gap, and we do that by creating access, opportunity, and support for entrepreneurs building businesses and contributing to their communities.

In the middle of uncertainty, we began building something that did not yet exist. On March 19, 2021, the Metro Detroit Black Business Alliance officially launched at Cutters. Entrepreneurs came and kept coming. Membership grew rapidly, making one thing clear: the need was real. So we built what the community asked for. We opened doors to capital through Capital Connect, worked side by side with entrepreneurs through BizWiz, created space for accountability through Truth to Power, and told the story of Black business through the Hastings Street Index. We invested in the next generation through UpNxt and supported food and hospitality entrepreneurs through Hardy Hospitality.

We also built pathways to wealth. In 2022, the Black Wealth Summit brought entrepreneurs together to learn legacy building, entrepreneurship, and real estate, and then turned knowledge into action by investing 2,500 dollars into the market for more than 200 entrepreneurs. That work expanded across the state through the Black Wealth Tours. In 2025, the Global Growth Accelerator launched to support businesses ready to scale. And along the way, we engaged policymakers, helping shape laws, remove barriers, and advocate for change.

By 2024, we became the Michigan Black Business Alliance, expanding to Flint, Lansing, and beyond, because this work was never meant for just one city. The moment of national attention has faded, but the need has not.

**And the moral of the story is this: when people come together to build what we need, we do not just create programs. We create power, possibility, and a future that did not exist before. And the Michigan Black Business Alliance is just getting started.**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO



## DEAR MEMBERS, PARTNERS, AND SUPPORTERS

Five years ago, we launched in the middle of a crisis because Black entrepreneurs could not afford to wait for the right moment. There was no right moment. There was only the work.

What we have built is more than a membership organization. We have built a community of entrepreneurs who refuse to be overlooked, a network of partners who put resources behind their values, and a growing ecosystem where Black owned businesses do not just survive, they grow, scale, and lead. We started in Metro Detroit, working out of borrowed space. Today, we are the Michigan Black Business Alliance, present in Detroit, Flint, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and expanding across the state.

We serve all entrepreneurs. Our mission is rooted in advancing Black businesses, and we do that while creating access, opportunity, and support for anyone building a business and contributing to their community.

Small businesses are not small in impact. They employ nearly half of Michiganders and Detroiters. They are the backbone of our economy, the heartbeat of our neighborhoods, and too often, the least heard in the rooms where decisions are made. Small business needs a voice. We help provide it.

Our impact is only possible because of our partners. From funders to institutions to corporate and community leaders, we have been supported by organizations that chose to invest not just in our work, but in the entrepreneurs we serve. They have helped us expand access to capital, deliver high quality programming, and build pathways for businesses to grow and scale in meaningful ways.

Since our founding, we have supported nearly 2,000 members in accessing capital, strengthening their operations, refining their business models, and connecting to real economic opportunity. The challenges have not disappeared, but the environment is different because we have been in it, advocating, building, and refusing to let the story end at struggle.

This report is honest. It reflects what our members have told us, what our programs have delivered, and what we know is possible when a community shows up for itself. The next chapter belongs to all of us. And we are just getting started.

With gratitude,

*Charity Dean*

Charity Dean  
President & CEO, Michigan Black Business Alliance

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS\*

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Owner/CEO

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**JAY WILLIAMS, SECRETARY**  
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Owner

\*As of December 31, 2025

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Michigan Black Business Alliance is to help close the racial wealth gap by developing programs and advocating for policies that result in profitable and sustainable Black-owned businesses connected to public and private economic opportunities, while building trusted relationships.

## OUR VISION

Our vision flows into these priority areas:

- ▶ Disrupting the Status Quo
- ▶ Building & Growing Strong Black Businesses
- ▶ Connecting & Transforming the Ecosystem
- ▶ Expanding Our Impact With & For Black Entrepreneurs
- ▶ Operational Resilience & Excellence

## OUR CORE VALUES

- ▶ We create opportunities for Black entrepreneurs to thrive
- ▶ We are committed to serving each generation of entrepreneurs
- ▶ Knowledge is power, Execution is too
- ▶ We commit to truth & transparency
- ▶ We fearlessly operate from abundance, not scarcity

# CLEAR FROM THE START



# OVER 2,000 STRONG

## OUR MEMBERS

Over five years, MBBA has grown into a statewide community of nearly 2,000 entrepreneurs at every stage — from the business owner with an idea and a plan, to the established operator building generational wealth. Members represent food and beverage, retail, professional services, arts, healthcare, construction, and more.

**And while MBBA was born in Detroit, the membership has always reached further: the majority of members operate outside Metro Detroit, spanning Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Genesee, and Washtenaw counties across the state.**



In October 2024, MBBA relocated the BLK Biz Hub to a larger headquarters that serves as the primary gathering place for entrepreneurs & partners across the region.



# OUR PROGRAMS

## CAPITAL CONNECT

*MBBA's Flagship Capital-Readiness Program*

Business plans, financial projections, pitch development, and direct funder connections. 100% of graduates would recommend it.

**97%** said it was worth the time. **\$14.7M** in capital accessed or supported over 5 years.

## BLK PRINT

*The starting line for entrepreneurs building something real*

BLK Print covers business legitimacy, model development and capital readiness.

**97%** Rated it Excellent or Very Good.  
**94%** Said it Met or Exceeded Expectations

## HARDY HOSPITALITY

*Built for food & beverage, hospitality, and CPG businesses*

Focuses on the operational systems and service standards that make businesses procurement-ready.

**95%** Relevance Rating.  
**91%** reported Stronger Back-of-House Operations

## BIZ-WIZ ON DEMAND

*1:1 technical assistance, consultations, and service provider connections*

Meeting members wherever they are.

**The Most-Used Support Program in MBBA's Portfolio.**

## UPNXT YOUTH

*Ages 16–24 placed in paid internships with MBBA member businesses*

Building entrepreneurship pipelines while providing workforce support to host businesses.

## GLOBAL GROWTH ACCELERATOR

*For businesses that have already proven the concept. GGA is MBBA's accelerator for second-stage, high-growth Black-owned companies, delivering bespoke consulting, peer-strategy sessions, and Master Classes focused on scaling, M&A, human capital, and capital readiness.*

The inaugural cohort of 8 companies has logged **2,250** hours of engagement. Three clients secured **\$2.35M in new capital**. **15 new full-time positions** have been created across the cohort. One cohort member **grew revenue 45% year-over-year** and **completed an acquisition.**

**Cohort 2 launches in 2026, with a goal of 40 businesses served by 2027.**

# HEARD. SEEN. COUNTED.

## WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING

Between December 2025 and January 2026, Batts Consulting Group conducted an independent Member Impact & Experience Evaluation based on survey responses from 326 MBBA members.

“ I walk away with a stronger foundation & renewed confidence as both a creative and businesswoman. Thank you for creating a space where we feel seen, supported, and equipped to grow.

- Katrina Cross-Daniels |  
Katrina Cross Photography  
BLK Print Graduate

“ Capital Connect provided clarity, confidence, and direction at a pivotal time in my business journey.

- Jarael M., |  
Major CPA Tax & Accounting Services  
Capital Connect Graduate



**80%**  
Had a Positive Overall Experience

**86%**  
recognize MBBA's advocacy & policy impact

**97%**  
rated Blk Print Excellent or Very Good

**80%**  
Capital Connect participants feel ready to pursue capital after completion

## THE WORK

Behind every number is a person who showed up. The entrepreneur who sat through Capital Connect after a full day of work and left knowing how to talk to a lender. The food business owner who came into Hardy Hospitality with a great product and walked out with the systems to take it somewhere. The 16-year-old in UpNxt who got their first real look at what owning a business could mean for their life.

## PROGRAM IMPACT 2021-2025

**26+**  
Cohort programs delivered

**800+**  
Entrepreneurs reached through structured programs

**92%+**  
Program completion rate

**\$151K+**  
Direct financial awards distributed

**\$14.7M+**  
Capital accessed or supported through MBBA programming

**580+**  
Classroom instruction hours delivered

**9000+**  
Workforce hours provided to brick and mortar businesses

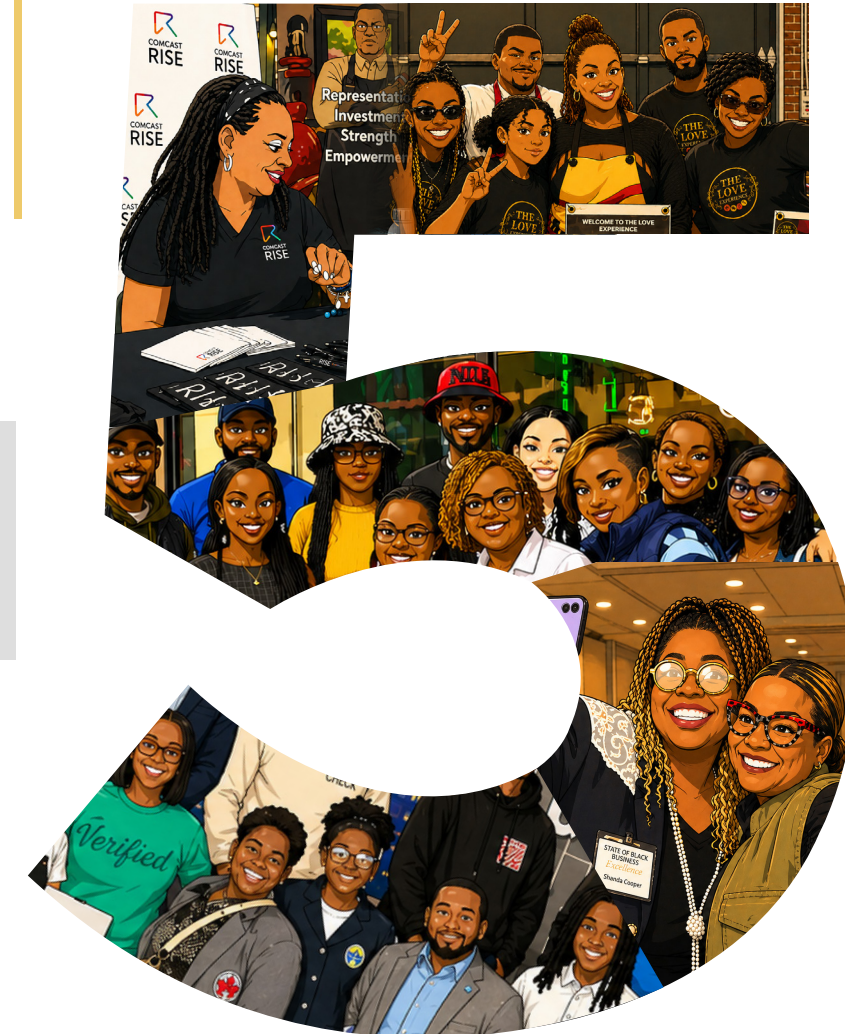
**7000+**  
1:1 technical assistance hours provided

**150+**  
Events hosted (2021-2025)

**2400+**  
BizWiz & membership engagement attendees

**14K+**  
Large scale community event attendees (incl. Juneteeth)

# 5 YEARS OF IMPACT



# IN THE ROOM

## CONNECTING BLACK BUSINESS TO REAL OPPORTUNITY

Education builds readiness. But what Black entrepreneurs ultimately need is access to real economic opportunity: contracts, vendor spots, and the visibility that turns a strong business into a growing one.

MBBA has connected members to vendor and contracting opportunities through the NFL Draft, AfroFuture Festival, Food & Wine Festival, and Juneteenth, while also investing directly in member businesses through its own procurement.

Connected members to over  
**1,500+**  
opportunities



**\$1.8M**

Spent with Black-owned businesses through NFL Draft vendor opportunity

**\$2.9M**

Invested in Black-owned businesses through MBBA partnerships & procurement

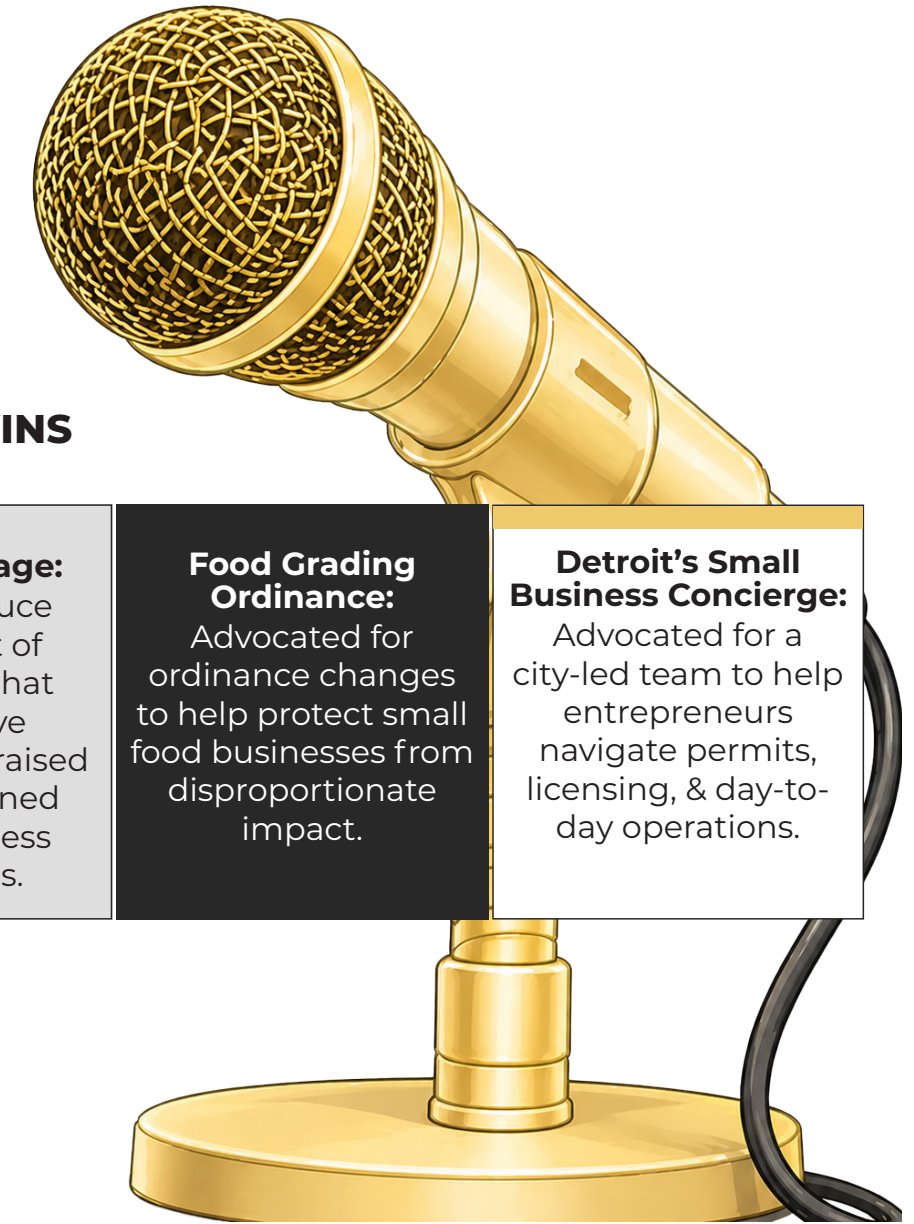
MBBA also buys Black. The Black Provider Network ensures that the businesses we ask others to support are businesses we support with our own dollars. We lead by example.

# ON THE RECORD

## OUR STATE LOOKS DIFFERENT BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN HERE

Small businesses are the backbone of Michigan's economy, yet their voices are often the last heard in policy conversations.

For five years, MBBA has been in the room, at the mic, and on the record working with policy makers to ensure they know the needs of small businesses.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF FIVE YEARS OF ADVOCACY WINS

<p><b>Detroit Small Business Ordinance:</b> Helped to simplify and streamline the operating processes for small businesses in the city.</p>	<p><b>Director of Entrepreneurship:</b> Advocated for Detroit's Mayor's Office to appoint a dedicated Director of Entrepreneurship.</p>	<p><b>One Fair Wage:</b> Helped reduce the impact of legislation that would have significantly raised costs &amp; strained small business operations.</p>	<p><b>Food Grading Ordinance:</b> Advocated for ordinance changes to help protect small food businesses from disproportionate impact.</p>	<p><b>Detroit's Small Business Concierge:</b> Advocated for a city-led team to help entrepreneurs navigate permits, licensing, &amp; day-to-day operations.</p>
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And so much more!  
We are grateful for our relationships with elected officials across the state. They come to the events, meet the members, and carry those voices into policy conversations and decisions.

# BUILT TOGETHER

Since 2021, philanthropy, business support organizations, corporate partners, and community institutions have played a critical role in expanding MBBA's reach, strengthening programs, and increasing access to opportunity for entrepreneurs across Michigan.



# ALREADY IN MOTION

## LOOKING AHEAD: CENTER FOR NEW INNOVATION

The Center for New Innovation is MBBA's boldest investment in what comes next — an initiative designed to expand how entrepreneurs across Michigan access resources, technology, and growth opportunities.

The Center will strengthen MBBA's role as a statewide hub, bringing together programs, partnerships, and tools that support business creation, scaling, and innovation at every stage.



# REACH

Across all of our social media platforms, MBBA has achieved a total reach of more than **190,000** since August 2025.

Our influence has been further amplified through coverage in respected business outlets, including Detroit News, Detroit Free Press and Crain's Detroit Business.

**21,770 FOLLOWERS**  
ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS

Facebook: Michigan Black Business Alliance  
Instagram: @Blackbizalliance  
Linked In: Michigan Black Business Alliance

Connect

