

# FAME-EAW

## August Newsletter

[fame-eaw.org](http://fame-eaw.org)

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Equity Alliance of  
**WASHINGTON**  
— F.A.M.E. —  
Thrive • Revive • Dwell

## Empowering Black Entrepreneurs in Black-Owned Business Month



### Letter from FAME-EAW

August is Black Owned Business Month, a time to celebrate the contributions and resilience of African American entrepreneurs. Black-owned businesses have a long and vibrant history in Seattle, dating back to the early 20th century. One of the earliest and most prominent was the Empire Theater, opened in 1913 by William Nickens, a former Pullman porter. The Empire showcased Black vaudeville acts and movies, serving as a hub of the city's African American community.

Over the following decades, a diverse array of Black-owned enterprises took root in neighborhoods like the Central District. These included grocery stores, barbershops, restaurants, funeral homes, and more. By 1960, there were an estimated 300 Black-owned businesses in Seattle, many of them concentrated along Jackson Street. During the civil rights era, these businesses played a vital role, providing meeting spaces and supporting the struggle for racial justice.

Though the loss of affordable housing and gentrification have taken a toll, Black entrepreneurs continue to shape Seattle's business landscape. As of 2022, there were over 4,000 Black-owned firms in the Seattle metro area, employing more than 15,000 people and generating \$2.8 billion in annual revenue, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Business Survey.

To promote wealth-building through entrepreneurship in the Black community, FAME-EAW is taking action. Many of our developments will offer below-market rate spaces, allowing small business owners time to build their assets, cash flow, and revenue without the burden of high rents. We also have partnered with the Black Dollar Days Task Force to provide hands-on support and mentorship to these entrepreneurs on their journeys. It's time to pour into and protect the businesses in our community.



## The Enduring Legacy and Vital Role of Black-Owned Businesses in Seattle

Supporting Black-owned businesses is important for economic equity and community vitality. Unfortunately, nearly 20% of Black-owned businesses fail within the first year and around 50% within five years. This high rate of failure is often due to challenges such as limited access to funding, networking opportunities, and systemic discrimination. To help change this, we must support these businesses not just not just during Black History Month, Juneteenth, or Black-Owned Business Month or other designated periods but throughout the year.

In Seattle, Black-owned businesses like Sunset Cafe, JuneBaby, The Postman Seattle, Flowers Just 4 U, and Estelita's Library carry forward a rich legacy of innovation and community impact. Supporting businesses like these helps address systemic inequalities in the business world. It challenges historical biases and promotes a more equitable marketplace, leading to long-term changes in economic policies and business practices. By shopping at Black-owned businesses, bringing a friend, and spreading the word, you can be part of a transformative effort. Your commitment can drive real change and help build a thriving economy where every business has a chance to succeed.

### Quote of the Month!

“ No action is too small when it comes to changing the world... I'm inspired every time I meet an entrepreneur who is succeeding against all odds. — Cyril Ramaphosa ”

# Business Resources

Starting a business can be challenging without support. Here are resources for Black entrepreneurs in Seattle, offering funding, mentorship, networking, and business development to help you succeed:

## 1. Black Dollar Days

- Website: [Black Dollar Days](#)
- About: Black Dollar Days supports Black businesses in Seattle through initiatives that encourage the community to buy from Black-owned businesses, promoting economic growth and sustainability.

## 2. Business Impact NW

- Website: [Business Impact NW](#)
- About: Provides business coaching, training, and access to capital for underserved entrepreneurs, with specific programs aimed at supporting Black-owned businesses.

## 3. Washington Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)

- Website: [Washington MBDA](#)
- About: A federal agency that provides support to minority-owned businesses, including financial assistance, procurement opportunities, and technical support.

## 4. Black Dot

- Website: [Black Dot](#)
- About: A co-working space and resource center designed to support Black entrepreneurs in Seattle. Black Dot offers workshops, mentorship, and networking opportunities to help Black businesses grow.

## 5. Tabor 100

- Website: [Tabor 100](#)
- About: A non-profit organization that focuses on supporting Black and minority business enterprises (MBEs) through advocacy, networking events, and access to business development resources.





# FAME-EAW Updates

On October 5th, the Black Community Impact Alliance (BCIA) will proudly celebrate its 10th anniversary, marking a decade of dedicated service to the historically excluded Black community in Washington. Since its inception in 2014, BCIA has been a powerful network of local businesses and organizations committed to fostering economic empowerment and social justice within the Central District, a historic hub for Seattle's Black community. Through its tireless efforts, BCIA has worked to ensure that taxpayer-funded initiatives and government-supported programs truly benefit Black children, families, and particularly those with low income.

BCIA's mission extends across critical areas like health, education, jobs, housing, and economic development, striving to create a future where the Black community can thrive and take ownership of their destiny. As we commemorate 10 years of "buying the blocks Black," we reflect on the profound impact BCIA has made in supporting the well-being and prosperity of Black individuals and families in the region. Join us in celebrating this milestone and the ongoing work to uplift and empower the Black community in Washington.

## Use Your Right to Vote

With Black eligible voters in the U.S. projected to reach 34.4 million in November 2024, the impact of the Black vote is powerful and growing. This group could be key in deciding crucial elections, including the presidency. In swing states like Georgia, where Black Americans make up a third of eligible voters, every vote counts.

But voting isn't just about the presidency. Local elections and policies directly impact daily life, from education to public safety. Understanding the local issues and participating in local elections is just as important as voting in national elections. Stay informed, register, and make sure your voice is heard in every election, big or small.

