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*This edition of*

# FEEL GOOD FRIDAY

is dedicated to United Way's Minority Small Business Program that provides completely free, one-on-one business coaching to participating businesses. Now in its third year, the program has demonstrated notable outcomes for participants.

If you or anyone you know is interested in participating, enrollment for the third session is open now on a rolling basis. Click here to let us know of your interest.

[Standbymede.org/programs](https://standbymede.org/programs)

## Why Do Small Businesses Matter?

Small businesses play a crucial role in building and sustaining communities. Often, minority-owned small businesses spring up in underserved or disadvantaged communities where resources are few and public transportation is scarce.

One of United Way of Delaware's areas of focus is to help our neighbors achieve financial empowerment for themselves and their families. To that end, we developed the Stand By Me program, and one of its most successful initiatives, the **Minority Small Business Program**.



1. Small businesses provide employment close to home, generate wealth and income, and contribute tax revenue. The money spent by patrons of these businesses and their employees circulates within the community, supporting other local businesses and services.
2. Small businesses add diversity to the local business landscape, offer unique products and services, give residents more choices and promote vibrant local culture.
3. Small businesses support their communities. They are more likely to contribute to local nonprofit organizations, sponsor events, donate goods or services, or contribute financially.
4. Small businesses play a pivotal role in revitalizing declining or neglected

neighborhoods.

5. Local businesses often serve as social hubs. Coffee shops, restaurants, and retail stores can become meeting places that drive community cohesiveness. Supporting small businesses can have far-reaching positive effects on the overall well-being of a community and its residents.

This edition of Feel Good Friday will demonstrate the value of our Minority Small Business Program. Remember, Shop Local and Shop Small!

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



## About The Stand By Me Minority Small Business Program

By Stephanie Lewis  
Sr. Director, Financial Empowerment

The United Way of Delaware's **Minority Small Business (MSB) Program**, led by Ray Parker and Steven Johnson, has emerged as a game-changer for minority entrepreneurs in the region. In less than three years, this innovative program has helped small businesses in Delaware generate millions of dollars in revenue, create numerous jobs, and has helped transform aspiring business owners into six-figure earners. The program offers personalized guidance from experienced advisors who dive deep into each business, working alongside the owners to drive growth and success.



With their wealth of experience, Ray and Steve have become invaluable mentors to the program's participants. They go beyond offering advice and roll up their sleeves, actively assisting with marketing campaigns, hiring strategies, sales training, market analysis, business plan development, securing funding, and even exploring new lines of business.

The program's inaugural cohort witnessed remarkable achievements, not only creating several six-figure earners but also generating over \$2 million in revenue within a mere nine months. Building on this success, the second cohort saw the transformation of five restaurant concepts from ideation to brick-and-mortar establishments.

If you are a minority business owner seeking assistance in scaling your business, the United Way of Delaware's Minority Small Business Program is your ideal destination. By participating in this program, you gain access to a supportive community, expert guidance, and the necessary resources to thrive in today's competitive market. To learn more, listen to Steve and Ray talk about the program in the videos below.

**"Minorities Are Starting Over Every Generation..."**



Stand By Me Coach Steve Johnson talks about what the Minority Small Business Program means to businesses and our community.

## "Generational Wealth Is Having Something You Can Pass Down and Keep It Going"



Stand By Me Delaware Minority Small Business Coach Clarence Ray Parker speaks about the importance of generational wealth and how he helps minority small businesses achieve it.

*Small Business Owners!  
Enrollment for the 2023-2024  
Minority Small Business Program is open now!  
[Click here for the enrollment application!](#)*

## In Their Own Words: Participants Tell The Story Best

Two graduates from the Minority Small Business Program discuss how the MSB program helped them be successful in business:



## Stix Chicken Now Open in Dover Mall

MSB program participant Jamela Johnson opened her new restaurant, Stix Chicken, in the Dover Mall in July. Coach Steve Johnson assisted Jamela expand her business from a food truck to a catering arm that earned contracts with companies such as Kraft and Amazon, and now to a bricks-and-mortar restaurant.



Congratulations, Jamela and Steve!



## A Participant's Story: Making Sure to Dream Big Enough

T&T Custom Embroidery was humming along, primarily serving a customer base of parents needing custom-embroidered school uniforms. It was a solid plan with an all-but guaranteed customer flow. After all, children grow up and go to school every year, right?

**Wrong**, said COVID. Schools shut down and so did the stream of business.

Owner Terrance Wiggins was at risk of losing more than his main income stream. "This business is all I ever wanted," he said. "It's true that if you love something so much, it's not work. Working here is my happy time."



Terrance had worked at Chrysler for 15 years until they shut down. Then he went to work for DuPont, but he was laid off. Twice-burned, Terance decided that owning the business was a safer route. "I said I would never work for anyone else again." And he

hasn't, ever persevering through a pandemic.

Terance knew he had to diversify his product lines and client base, and he turned to the Stand By Me Minority Business Program for help. His Coach, Steve Johnson, believed in T&T (Terance & Team) and jumped in to provide expert guidance on growing the business in innovative ways.

"Steve helped me focus on getting contracts and big orders, working at scale rather than the one-at-a-time way I was doing it. Now I have bigger goals, more machines and more employees to meet greater demand. Steve knows so much that I didn't know, and I couldn't have done this without him."

## Expressing Gratitude for the MSB Program



Dear Ray and the MSBP team,

I want to express my sincere appreciation for the recent disbursement of funds through the Minority Small Business Program. This unexpected increase in payment was exciting and heartwarming, and I cannot thank you enough for the capital funds provided not only in this distribution but also throughout the entire program.

Please extend my heartfelt thanks to Adam and the exceptional team at Barclays Bank. Their support and partnership played a vital role in enabling the growth and success of Mother, Baby and Beyond (MB&B). The dedication and commitment they have shown to the Minority Small Business Program is truly commendable.

Participating in the Minority Business Program through United Way has been life-changing for me and my business. This program not only provided us with financial resources but also instilled within me an unwavering belief in myself, my business, and the power of networking.

I'm incredibly grateful to United Way for creating and facilitating such a transformative program. It has opened doors for us that we could never have imagined before. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the remarkable individuals I have had the privilege of meeting through this program. The camaraderie, knowledge sharing, and support from fellow participants has been invaluable, and I am truly honored to have been a part of this community.

Ray, I want to take this moment to extend a special thank you to you. Our coaching sessions over the past year have been instrumental in guiding me on this remarkable journey. Your wisdom, expertise, and unwavering support have empowered me to reach new heights and has been the catalyst for the growth of Mother, Baby and Beyond. Your guidance and mentorship has been invaluable, and I am deeply grateful for your commitment to my success.

With profound gratitude,

LaToya Brathwaite-Washington, MSN, APRN, FNP

Founder and Lead Practitioner, Mother, Baby, & Beyond LLC



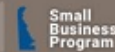
**Please Support Our Participants**

These articles and videos show you a few examples of our friends and participants in the Minority Small Business Program. We hope you will make a special effort to support our friends when you are seeking products or services.

To see a list of our participants to date, [please click here](#).

We hope you've enjoyed learning more about the Minority Small Business Program. If you are interested in finding out more, contact Stephanie Lewis ([slewis1@uwde.org](mailto:slewis1@uwde.org)). If you are interested in enrolling, please visit [our website](#).

Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think would benefit from participating!



## Support Our Work

### Live United!

If you would like to support our efforts to help build a better Delaware, please donate to United Way of Delaware [here](#). You can make a one-time donation or a recurring monthly contribution. When you give to the United Way of Delaware you're joining individuals and organizations who are working together to improve life for everyone in Delaware and Salem County (NJ). We appreciate your support.



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