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Collective Empowerment Group launches 2022 Executive Business Accelerator

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A business accelerator program tailored to small business owners has launched its fourth class featuring 10 Greater Cincinnati CEOs.

The Collective Empowerment Group, a “ministry in marketplace” organization that brings together leaders from churches, businesses and financial institutions, said its 2022 Executive Business Accelerator cohort features all minority-owned businesses in industries ranging from health care, construction, arts and insurance.

The goal of the program is to help owners of more established Cincinnati businesses – those that have moved beyond the startup phase – reach the “next tier of success while fostering more inclusive growth in the local economy.”

This is the accelerator’s fourth year. It launched in 2018 with a charter class of nine.

“We look forward to working with some of Cincinnati’s most promising entrepreneurs to help them fine-tune their businesses and learn how to overcome obstacles to success,” Paul Booth Jr., president of the Collective Empowerment Group, said in a release.



COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT GROUP
Paul Booth Jr. is the president of the Collective Empowerment Group, a Greater Cincinnati “ministry in marketplace” organization that brings together leaders from churches, businesses and financial institutions.

“The leaders in this year’s cohort share the drive and resilience needed for success.”

Participating businesses are required to have been in operation for at least two years, with annual revenues of between \$100,000 and \$10 million and at least one other full-time employee, in addition to the owner.

The participants were selected from hundreds of applicants. They include:

Oswald Baker, CEO of Half Price Roof, a Blue Ash-based roofing contractor

David Choate, CEO of Revolution Dance Theatre, a Northside-based African American dance company

Epiphany Davis, CEO of Have an Epiphany, a Cincinnati-based event planning and consultation company

Theresa Gordon, CEO of Sugar Loft Events2, Liberty Town Center-based event company

Fred Harrison, CEO of Fresh Coat Painters of Loveland and Anderson, an interior and exterior residential and commercial painting company

Caroletta James, CEO of ECO Health Care, a Mount Healthy-based center that specializes in preventative health as well as chronic and acute disease management

Crystal Render, CEO of Magnificent Morsels Catering, a Cincinnati-based catering company

James Stocks, CEO of DJX Construction, a Cincinnati-based general contracting firm specializing in civil/heavy construction

Toilynn O’Neal Turner, CEO of Robert O’Neal Multicultural Arts Center (ROMAC), a West End-based community arts group

Joyce Browning Walton, CEO of Silverton-based Allstate Browning Agency

The Executive Business Accelerator differs from other programs, Collective Empowerment said, because of its faith-based approach. The program receives broad support from the business community and local civic-minded nonprofits, including the African American Chamber of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky.

Deborah Davis, with the African American Chamber of Commerce, will help participants complete a three-year business growth plan, while exposing them to expertise from several guest instructors.

Collective Empowerment also is collaborating with Boston-based Interise, a national nonprofit that works to build diverse and inclusive local economies through small business development. Interise companies historically create new jobs at five times the

rate of the private sector, and the group has created more than 30,000 new jobs in total.

The six-month accelerator began in June. A graduation is scheduled for Dec. 1 at the Fifth Third Tower downtown.

Sponsors for the Executive Business Accelerator program include Fifth Third Bank, ArtsWave and the African American Chamber of Commerce.

“These inspiring leaders hold incredible potential for business development that will add jobs in an inclusive way,” Eric Kearney, president and CEO of the African American Chamber, said in the release. “We eagerly anticipate the great things to come from this class.”

The Collective Empowerment Group was first established in the Washington, D.C., area in 1993 as a way to build better banking relationships for churches and their members.

It expanded to Cincinnati in 2011, and the organization is currently supported by 25 churches in Greater Cincinnati with 53 member businesses.

In addition to the Executive Business Accelerator, Collective Empowerment's programs include Young Entrepreneurs Society, an entrepreneur and finance training program for young people ages 12-17; and Launch Fund, which provides micro grants from \$500 to \$1,000 to low income, small minority-owned businesses in Hamilton County, among other offerings.

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