

# CITY OF YOUNGSTOWN

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In the City of Youngstown, the Division of Economic Development engages with the City's minority businesses by fostering relationships with the local Minority Business Assistance Center (MBAC). The Division's Director of Economic Development sits on the Advisory Board of MBAC and participates in biannual meetings to discuss programming metrics, unique challenges that owners are facing, and identifying solutions through strategic partnerships. The Director formed a local contingency consisting of representatives from MBAC and United Returning Citizens to put forth challenges and offer recommendations to the FDIC for promoting economic inclusion. The Division of Economic Development partnered with the Local Procurement Technical Assistance Center to host procurement matchmaking events. The events bring industry leaders and government agencies together with Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women in Entrepreneurship (WE) businesses to network with key decision makers and learn more about bidding opportunities.

The Community Development Division of the city has provided \$100,000.00 in Community Development Block Grant funds to the Youngstown Business Incubator (YBI) for their efforts to assist minority owned businesses. For example, through YBI, the WE Program and MBAC has provided the following during the COVID19 pandemic:

1. Training/Group Webinar opportunities
  - How to pivot in order to maintain relevancy in the marketplace
  - Intro to use webinar platforms i.e. zoom and google hangouts. Provided one on one training
  - Conducted three trainings on the PPP and EIDL Loans. Business Counselors walked each client through the entire loan application process
  - Virtual accountings solutions for small businesses
  - Budgeting during a crisis
2. Found and distributed business grant opportunities to our list of clients
  - Walked them through the entire grant application process.
3. Provided free promotion throughout social media platforms to increase sales opportunities
4. Created professional digital marketing content that the individuals could share online, text or email
5. Provided ongoing business counseling; marketing, access to capital, business development
6. Provided tech support for those who are not tech savvy.
7. Currently preparing a virtual 10-week Women in Entrepreneurship class that is slated to start this summer.

We are dedicated to ensuring that minority owned business continue to thrive in the City of Youngstown.