



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Donavan
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
McKinney
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
N/A
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
Michigan Black Business Alliance
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
280 W. Adams Detroit MI 48226
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
Statewide
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
Joe Tate, District 9
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution.  
A \$2 million state appropriation to the Michigan Black Business Alliance (MBBA) is an investment in Michigan's small business community. It will help create high-quality jobs across the state across various industries, ensuring the economic strength of the state. Additionally, the investment in MBBA will support families, strengthen local economies, and keeping talent rooted in Michigan. This funding ensures the state is working to create economic freedom for tens of thousands of Michiganders, responsible employers who will be able to reinvest in the communities where they operate. It also helps grow the tax

base that funds schools, infrastructure, and vibrant public spaces. Through this appropriation Michigan retains talent, sustains small business- the lifeblood of Michiganders- leading in the nation in the creation of thriving communities.

9. Attach documents here if needed:

Attachments added to the end of this file.

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

2000000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

["Federal","State","Private"]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

KERRY BUFFINGTON Partner Owner, Kapstone Employment Services; KANDISS ECTON Insurance Agent, Kandiss Ecton Insurance and Financial Services, Inc.; JERMAINE RUFFIN Vice President, Invest Detroit; JAY WILLIAMS, PMP Manager, DTE Public Affairs; DONALD RENCHER, ESQ. President and CEO, Hudson Webber Foundation; JOSEPH BOWMAN Owner & CEO, Humble Brothers, LLC; RODERICK HARDAMON CEO & Chief Strategist, URGE Imprint LLC; JEHAN CRUMP-GIBSON, ESQ. Managing Partner, Great Lakes Legal Group PLLC; MEAGAN DUNN CEO, Covenant House Michigan; SHAQUILA MYERS

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

Q4 of 2025 anticipated completion is 2029

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes



# 2024 **MBBA**

## ANNUAL REPORT

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# LETTER FROM THE CEO

Looking back at 2024, I'm really excited about all the progress we made at the Michigan Black Business Alliance (MBBA). We couldn't have done it without our amazing board, team, and the incredible support of our members. It was a huge year for us, going from MDBBA to MBBA and growing our impact statewide.

*Here's what we accomplished:*

## **Big Growth:**

We added over 600 new members, pushing us past 1900 total! Plus, we've expanded our reach across Michigan through partnerships with 100K Ideas in Flint, LEAP in Lansing, the Grand Rapids Regional Chamber, and Emerge in Benton Harbor. We're also working with Grand Rapids city leaders and Senator Winnie to help with their economic plans.

## **Strong Programs:**

Even with the ups and downs of the economy and funding, our core programs – Capital Connect, BizWiz, Hardy Hospitality Program, Black Wealth Tours, and UpNxt – kept providing valuable support to entrepreneurs.

## **Policy & Advocacy:**

Our team successfully engaged in impactful policy advocacy efforts, equipping entrepreneurs with the knowledge and tools to navigate the political and regulatory landscape.

We're so thankful for everyone who supports us – our members, volunteers, funders, and partners. Let's keep working together to build a strong future for Black entrepreneurs in Michigan. We're looking forward to what 2025 brings!

**Sincerely,**

*Charity Dean*





# OUR MISSION

The mission of 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 that are connected to public and private economic opportunities while building trusted relationships.

# OUR VISION

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

# OUR BOARD OF **DIRECTORS**

We extend our deepest gratitude to our current board members for their instrumental role in guiding MBBA toward success.

**Kerry Buffington, Chair**  
Kapstone Employment Services, Partner and Owner

**Joseph Bowman, Vice Chair**  
Humble Brothers, Owner/CEO

**Jermaine Ruffin, Treasurer**  
Invest Detroit, Vice President

**Jay Williams, Secretary**  
Miss Eva's Detroit, Owner

**Jehan Crump-Gibson, Esq., Managing Partner**  
Great Lakes Legal Group PLLC

**Meagan Dunn, CEO**  
Covenant House Michigan

**Kandiss Ecton, CEO & President**  
Kandiss Ecton Insurance and Financial Services, Inc.

**Roderick Hardamon, CEO & Strategist**  
URGE Imprint, LLC

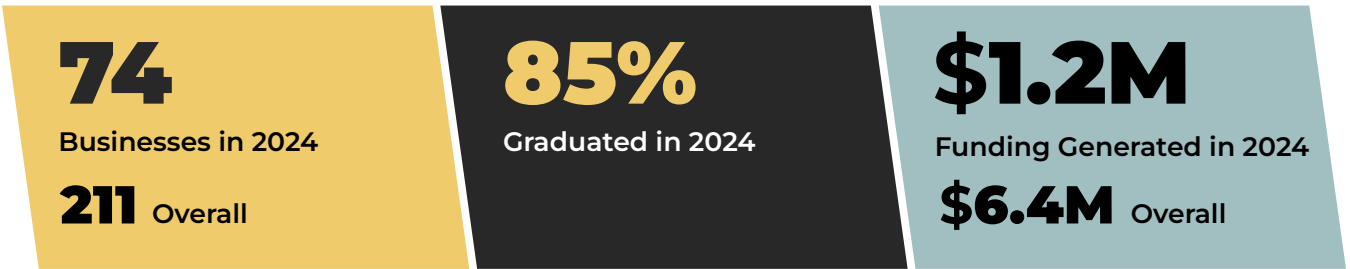
**Shaquila Myers, Chief of Staff**  
Speaker of the House Joe Tate 10th District

**Donald Rencher, President & CEO**  
Hudson Webber Foundation

# OUR **PROGRAMS**

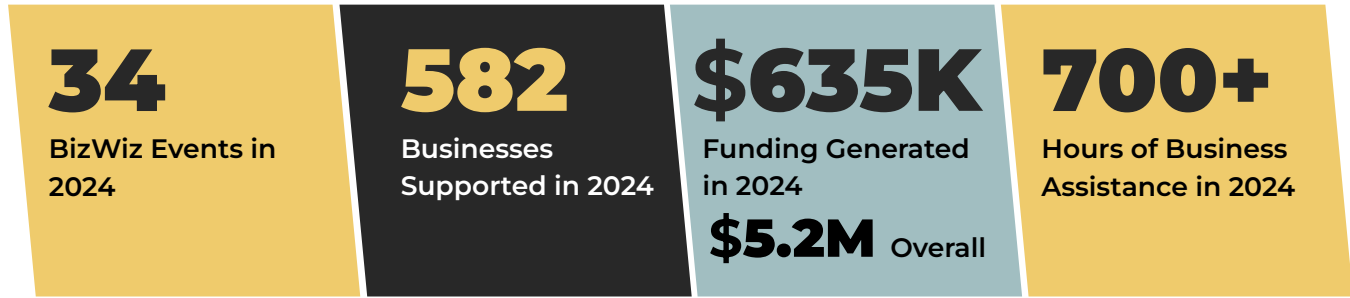
## Capital Connect

Black entrepreneurs often face significant funding obstacles despite their passion and purpose. MBBA's Capital Connect program addresses this by providing more than just education; it's a direct pathway to capital, enabling businesses to grow. With thirteen lending partners, we successfully connected businesses with the funding they needed.



## BizWiz 1:1 Business Assistance

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and we understand that Black-owned businesses often face unique challenges. That's why we created BizWiz, a business assistance program designed to provide tailored, one-on-one support to help member businesses navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship. We also curate BizWiz events to respond to the individual needs of our members.

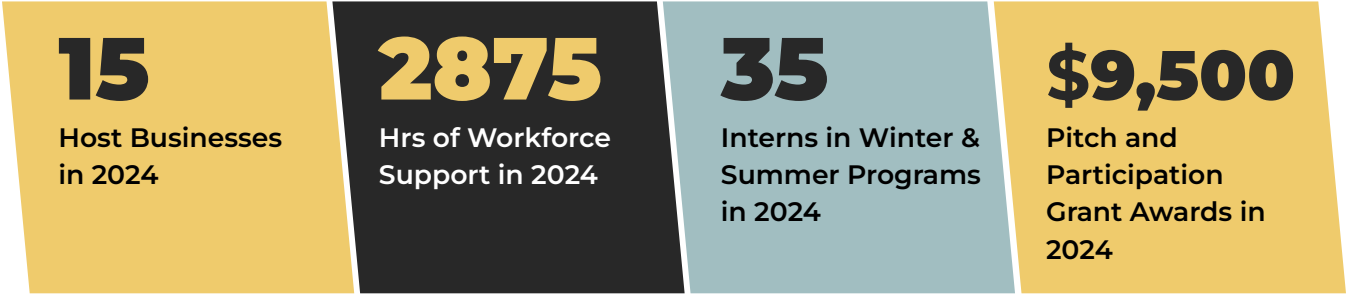


“MBBA has been a blessing to me since I joined 2 years ago. Capital Connect gave me more confidence, knowledge, and wisdom to navigate the day-to-day and scalability of my business. MBBA is like a business family and I encourage anyone with a Black-owned business in Michigan to join!”  
Ali Evans , Owner of GODNII  
MBBA Member



### UpNxt: Building the Next Generation of Black Business Leaders

At MBBA, we believe in creating pathways, not obstacles, for the next generation of Black entrepreneurs. UpNxt provides a fully immersive entrepreneurship experience for youth and young adults aged 16-24, coupled with the hands-on experience they need to turn ambition into action.. Through mentorship, development workshops, and employment opportunities, it introduces participants to entrepreneurship basics in both Winter and Summer sessions.



### Black Wealth Tours (BWT)

Powered by Prudential, our Black Wealth Tours bring wealth-building information to communities, focusing on Black Entrepreneurship, Black Ownership, and Black Legacy Planning.



### Advocacy



We champion policy changes that directly benefit small Black-owned businesses by advocating for equitable access to capital, streamlined regulatory processes, and targeted support programs. This ensures our members have a fair playing field and the resources necessary to grow and succeed in Michigan. Some of our policy wins include, but are not limited to:

- Creation of a Director position within the Detroit Mayor’s office focused on Entrepreneurship and Economic Opportunity.
- Food Ordinance: Updating Dining with Confidence ordinance to include small business concerns
- State of Michigan Innovation Fund



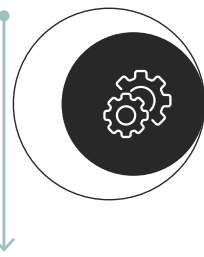
# OUR GROWTH



## 2021-2022 600+ Members

**Gathering businesses, initial meetings, and laying the groundwork for community engagement.**

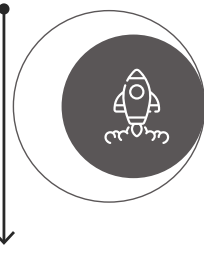
We launched Capital Connect, BizWiz, and UpNxt, significantly enhancing businesses' access to capital. Our UpNxt youth entrepreneurship initiative, delivered summer internships and valuable workforce support to numerous brick-and-mortar member businesses. This, coupled with our significant membership growth, underscores our increasing community engagement.



## 2023 Continued Program Development

**Black Wealth Summit & Launch of Black Wealth Tours**

We focused on strengthening our current programs, as well as launching Black Wealth Summit, Black Wealth Tours, and launched our Black investment program with Stackwell, providing funds to black entrepreneurs to invest.



## 2024 1,900+ Members

**New Programs Launched**

BLK Print & Hardy Hospitality Program was created to address unique and industry-specific business needs.

Continued membership growth underscores the organization's responsiveness to the community.

### QUICK FACT:

Since inception, we've helped to create approximately 1,200 jobs and 3,800 jobs were retained.





# OUR EXPANSION

## THE BLK BIZ HUB

Powered by MEDC

Our Blk Biz Hub allows us to offer more programs, host more workshops, and create a more comfortable, collaborative, and motivating environment for entrepreneurs.

<b>Art Partnership:</b> Partnered with Irwin House to showcase and sell their unique works of local artists.	<b>Pop-up vending:</b> Opportunities for members to showcase their businesses, network, attract new clients, and forge strategic alliances.	<b>Workspace Rentals:</b> Residencies offering dedicated desk space in our BLK Biz Center, with access to all hub amenities.	<b>Zen Booth:</b> Recharge, Reset, Relax in a state-of-the-art massage chair.	<b>Ideation Room:</b> Dedicated space for team thought storming and creative collaboration.
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QUICK FACT:

Since inception, over **\$11M** to Black businesses





# OUR ENHANCED PROGRAMMING

MBBA's programming evolves with the expressed needs of our membership. To that end, in 2024, we launched 2 new programs.

## BLK Print

To strengthen businesses before capital access, we launched The BLK Print, an eight-week prerequisite to Capital Connect. Participants refine ideas through Design Thinking, build business models, and learn financial concepts. **Eight businesses completed the program in late 2024 and will advance to Capital Connect in Spring 2025.**

## Hardy Hospitality Program

This game-changing initiative is designed to take second-stage businesses to the next level by providing crucial access to opportunities, with two specialized tracks: Food & Beverage, designed to secure vendor placements in stadiums, hospitality venues, and restaurant chains, and Consumer Packaged Goods, aimed at getting products onto major retail shelves and into large distribution networks.



“Participating in the Hardy Hospitality Program has been a transformative experience for Modern Maison Co. “This experience culminated in a \$5K grant, which has empowered me to expand my charcuterie offerings and refine my craft. I’m deeply grateful to MBBA for the opportunity to learn from industry leaders and for the program’s foundational role in my business’s success”.

Char Mills, Owner of Modern Maison Co.  
MBBA Member

”

REMEMBERING

Max Hardy

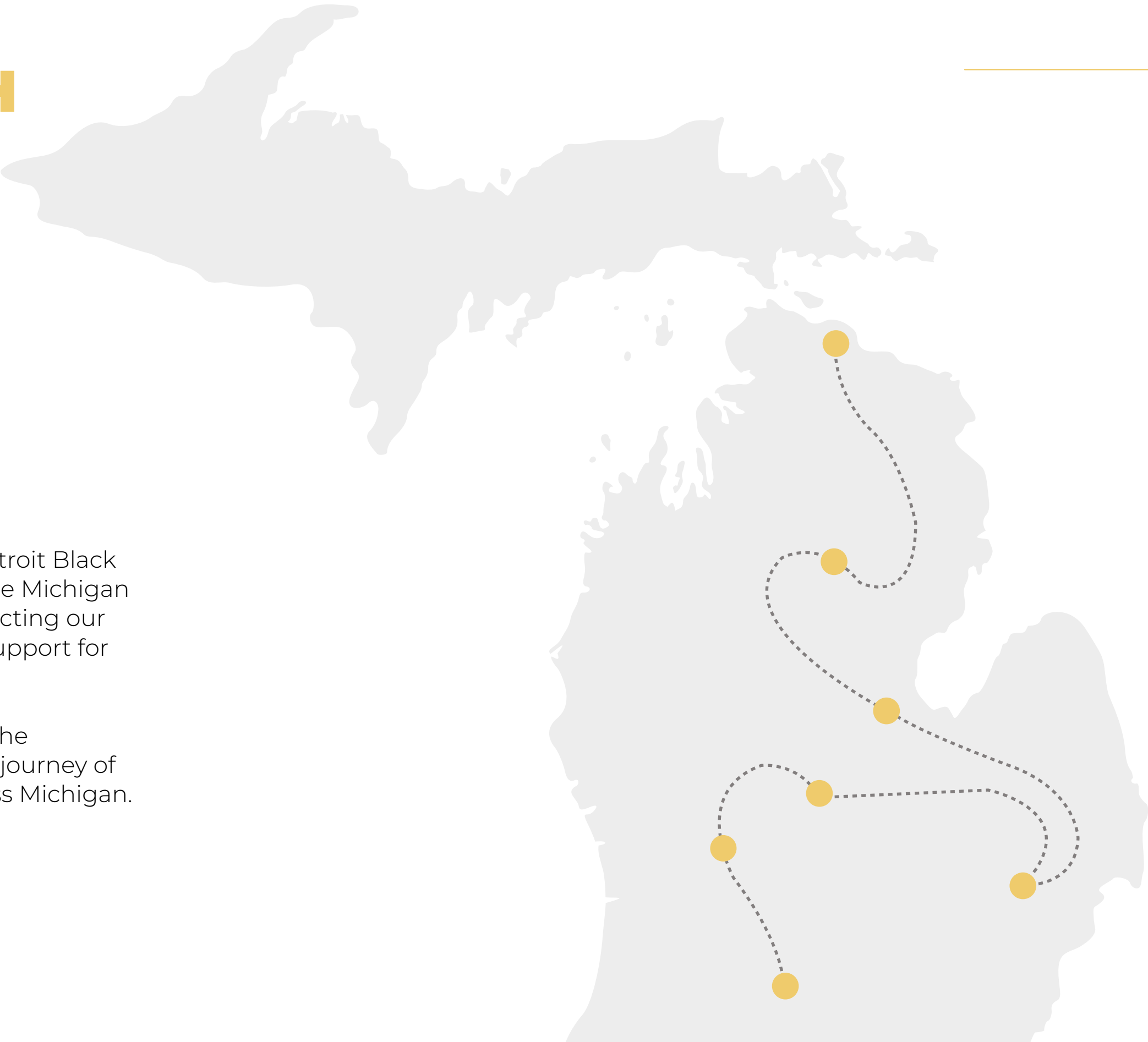
1983-2024



# EXPANDING **OUR REACH**

In March 2024, the Metro Detroit Black Business Alliance became the Michigan Black Business Alliance, reflecting our commitment to statewide support for Black entrepreneurs.

Three years after launching the Alliance, we have begun our journey of expanding our mission across Michigan.



# OUR OPPORTUNITIES

Staying true to our mission, MBBA seeks to create and connect our members to economic opportunities.

MBBA Direct Grant Opportunities in 2024	Strategic Partnership Opportunities
<div><b>\$5K</b> Max Hardy Health and Wellness Grants</div>	<div><b>\$88K</b> Afro Nation</div>
<div><b>\$15K</b> Office Depot Elevate Together Grants</div>	<div><b>\$70K</b> Black Food and Wine Festival</div>
<div><b>\$10K</b> Magic of Melanin Grants</div>	<div><b>\$1.5M</b> NFL Draft</div>

QUICK FACT

1,000+ opportunities created.

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE NFL DRAFT

MBBA proactively partnered with the NFL Draft to connect our members to event opportunities and build collaborative relationships among ethnic chambers. During the April 2024 Detroit Draft, we placed Black-owned businesses at the heart of the event, ensuring they effectively leveraged the city’s energy and available opportunities

Leading up to the NFL Draft, MBBA secured diverse opportunities for Black-owned businesses, including vendor, retail, and service roles. To further expand member access, we launched the BLK Market, partnered with Recess Pop-Up for a four-day event, and collaborated with All Things Detroit to activate members in city parks. We remain dedicated to advocating for small business support.

## The Impact!

<div><b>40%</b> NFL contracts: Black-owned Businesses win</div>	<div><b>33</b> MBBA Sponsored MBE Certifications Black-owned Businesses</div>
<div><b>50+</b> NFL Committee Meetings</div>	<div><b>60</b> Member Contract Nominations</div>
<div><b>\$25K</b> Vendor Generated Income 1-Day BLK Market Event</div>	<div><b>60</b> BLK Market Member Vendors</div>
<div><b>\$164K</b> Vendor Generated Income 4-Day Recess Pop-Up Event</div>	<div><b>6</b> Recess Member Vendors</div>
<div><b>\$25K</b> Vendor Generated Income All Things Detroit Activation</div>	<div><b>13</b> All Things Detroit Member Vendors</div>





# HOW WE DO BUSINESS

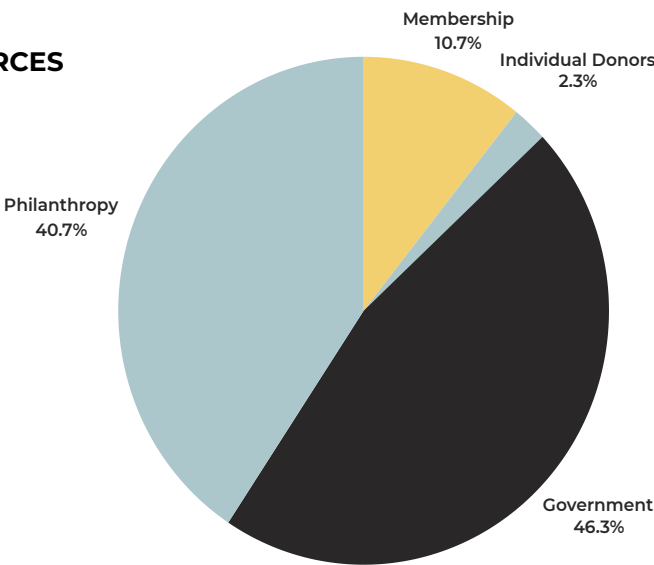
MBBA's success is a direct result of partnership and membership commitment. We operate from a place of abundance, operational excellence, and a commitment to live out our values.

We have committed to leverage the expertise of our members to provide business assistance to members that need it. In 2024, over 20 members of our **BLACK PROVIDER NETWORK** provided **OVER 200 HOURS** in black business assistance.

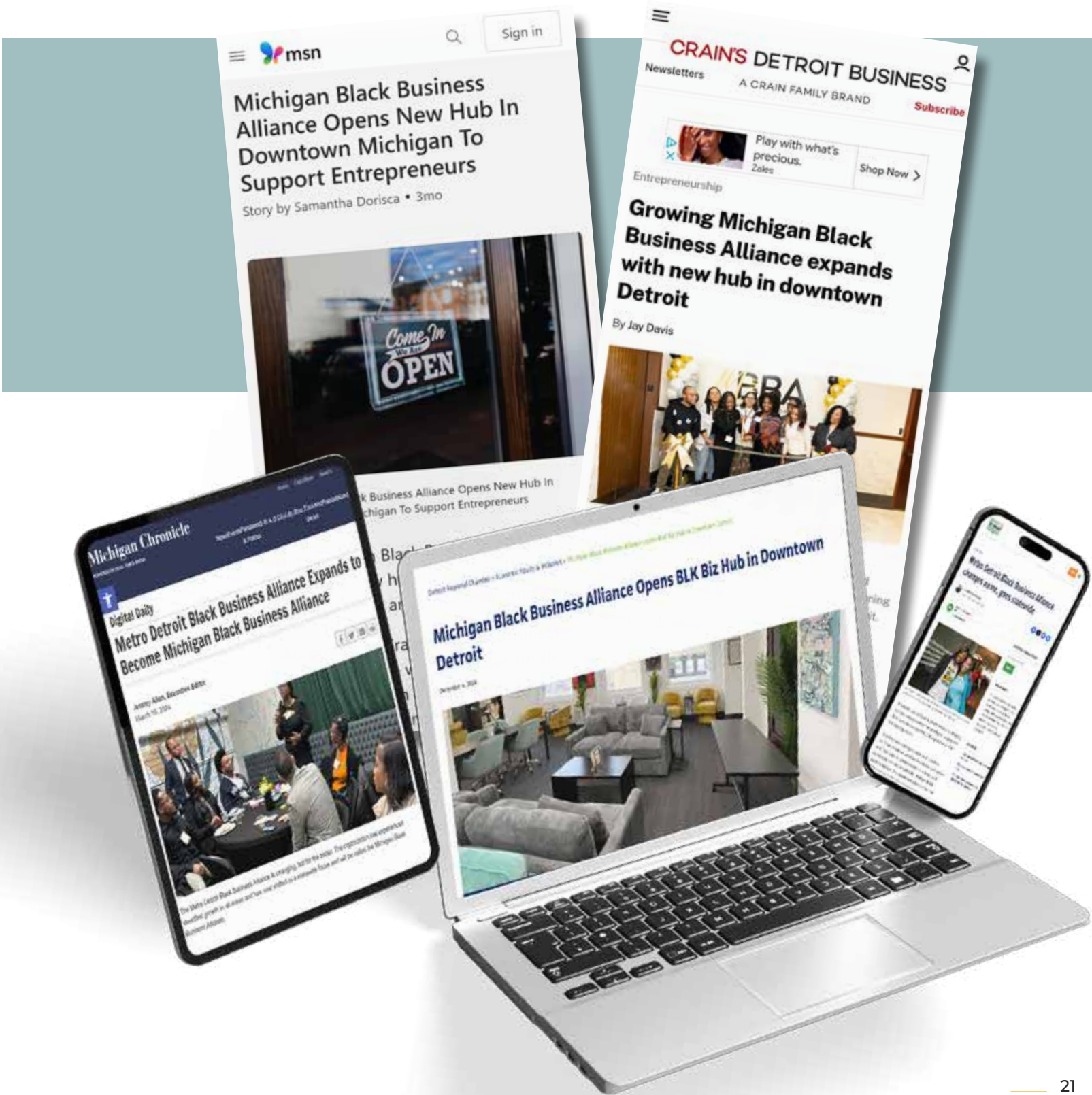
## QUICK FACT:

In 2024, MBBA spent \$1M on Black-owned businesses.

MBBA FUNDING SOURCES

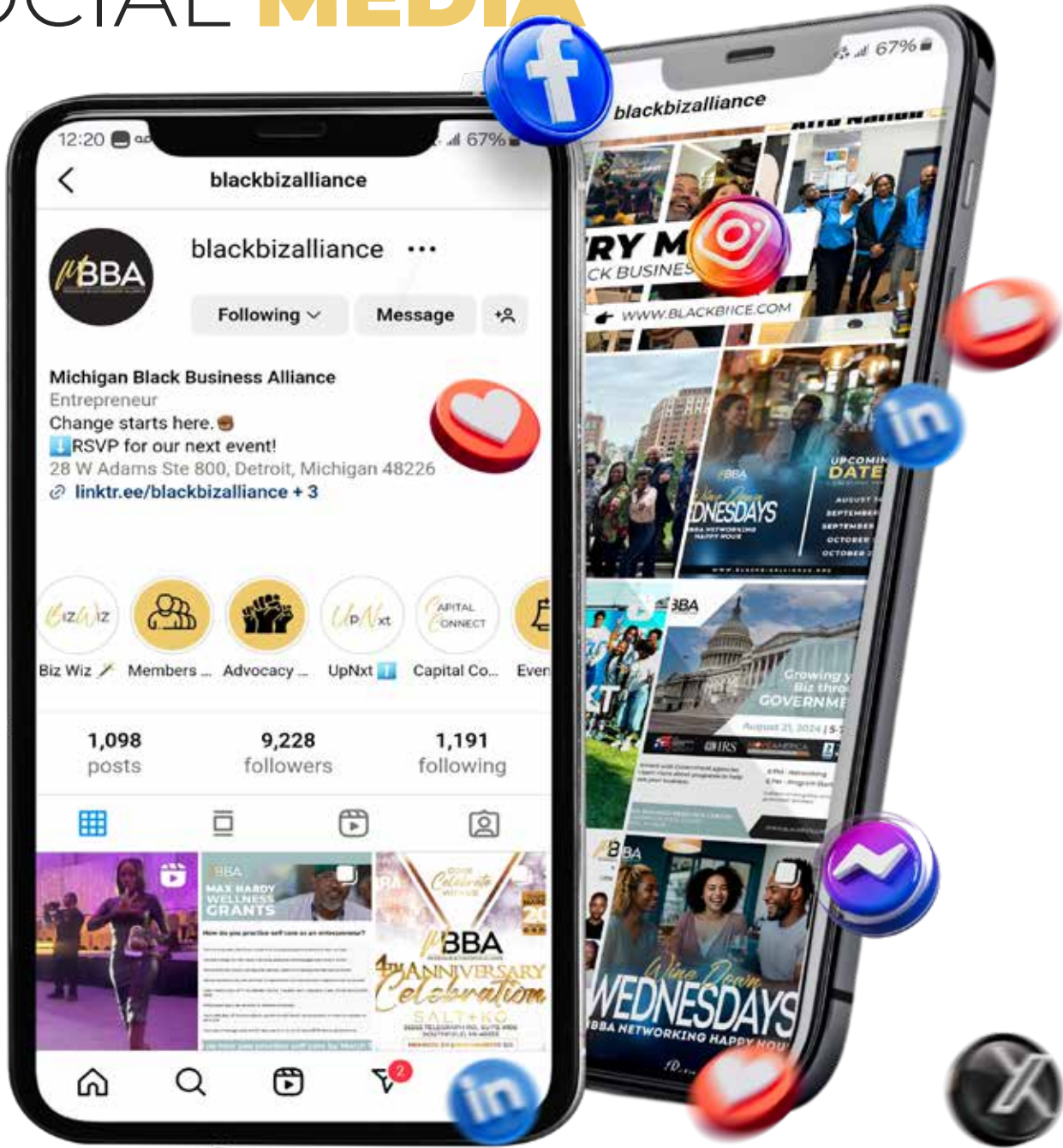





# IN THE PRESS





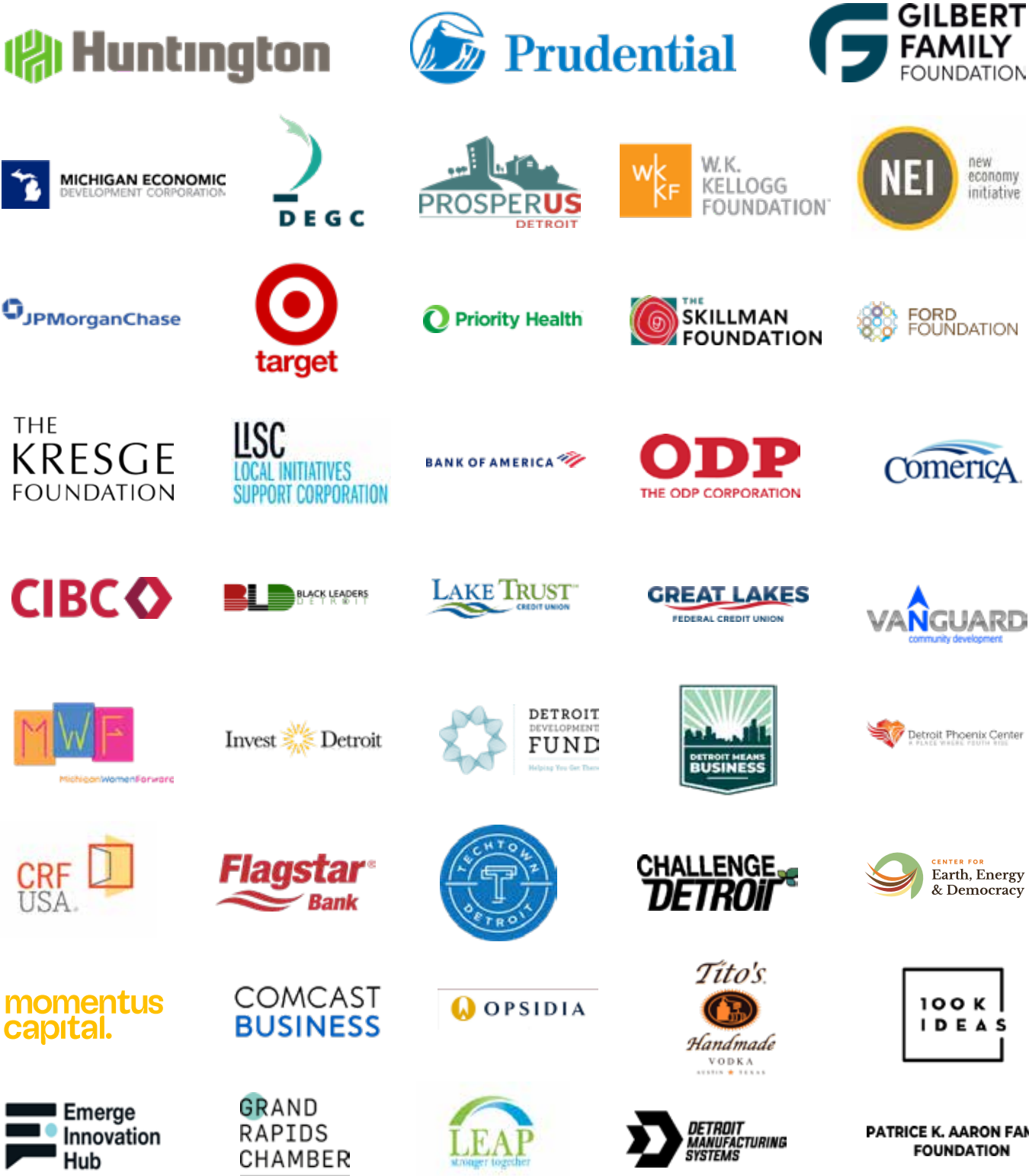
# SOCIAL MEDIA



-  **FACEBOOK**  
Michigan Black Business Alliance
-  **INSTAGRAM**  
@Blackbizalliance
-  **LINKEDIN**  
Michigan Black Business Alliance

Number of Followers:  
**17,024**

# PARTNERS & SPONSORS





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[www.blackbizalliance.com](http://www.blackbizalliance.com)

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