

COVID19 RESILIENCY RELIEF PROGRAM



REOPENING BLACK BUSINESSES TOGETHER



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Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce Announces COVID-19 Resiliency Relief Program

For Immediate Release:

May 11, 2020, Oakland, CA – Leadership of the Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce (OAACC), has set forth a resiliency relief program to assist its members affected by the COVID-19 health pandemic, announced Chairwoman Shonda Scott and President Cathy Adams. The OAACC Resiliency Relief Program will be funded by contributions from supporters committed to the solvency and survival of local African American businesses that are currently members of the organization (www.oaacc.org).



“The Chamber has been relentless in addressing the needs of our membership. We are doing all we can to assist them during this critical time,”
states Chairwoman Shonda Scott.

OAACC conducted an internal survey within its membership to assess the impact of COVID-19; results varied from severe need to no impact, according to Lynell Bevels, OAACC’s Community Engagement Partner. “Many of our businesses said they were happy that we reached out to them to see how things were going. Further, they let us know that the outreach is a source of encouragement along with offsetting any financial shortfalls we could assist with. It underscores what we know about the African American community, overall, that one size does not fit all despite skewed perceptions. Some of our members have great need others do not.”

Based on expressed need and the level of support received, the Resiliency Relief Program will serve as a temporary stop gap. Cynthia Jones, an advisor to OAACC’s Resiliency Relief Program Task Force describes the application process as such, “In an effort to support local small businesses disrupted by COVID-19, that are required to Shelter In Place (SIP) **pg 1 of 2**

in compliance with Federal orders, OAACC's Resiliency Relief Program is designed to provide funding and support to members with an expressed need. This relief program is a direct response to the immediate crisis, currently in place."



Federal funds made available through the Small Business Administration (SBA) and/or the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), "somehow didn't make it onto the financial statements of our African American businesses most in need," explains President Cathy Adams.

Synopsis of the OAACC Resiliency Relief Program--

Thus, and in response, Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce (OAACC) developed a **Call to Action Advisory Council** from its' African American business community of entrepreneurs and small business owners to develop a relief program that will heed the call and respond accordingly.

The OAACC Leadership Team will perform robust fund development to amass a war chest of resources that will be GRANTED to our small, African American and/or minority businesses, which will assist -- financially and emotionally, during these unprecedented times -- with ongoing business expenses to include: payroll, office rent, goods, services and related expenditures.

The grants are subject to eligibility requirements.

While we recognize that these grants will in no way make up for all of the financial losses experienced by many of our African American business and community membership, the intent is to provide relevant short term relief.

Grants will be made on a first come first serve basis to businesses whose application meets the eligibility criteria. There is a limited allocation of money subject to funds raised.

Adams concludes, "The African American business community will survive this health crisis but the degree of our recovery will be determined by the financial resources and healthcare services made available. Before we were staring COVID-19 in the face, the Black community was swimming upstream against a current of inequities and insufficient services to balance the quality of life across racial demographics. Nonetheless, we have pushed forward. The goal now is to recover, equally, during and on the other side of this debilitating economic and health crisis."