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CAAAB Consulting Report:

Comprehensive Consulting Practices for Small
African American Businesses

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Introduction

The purpose of the following report is to add to the Acceleration for the Advancement of African American Business' (CAAAB) current consulting model and networking practices through an in-depth analysis of relevant literature and a survey of CAAAB member businesses. The report provides a comprehensive look at up-to-date theories and practices in the field of consulting for a more ethnically and socioeconomically diverse enterprise pool; as well as exploring best practices and recent theory for building social capital in small minority businesses. The information provided is meant to complement the programming currently employed by CAAAB as a means of furthering its micro and macro missions to increase growth in the small business sector, thereby positively impacting unemployment, infusing communities with additional tax revenue, and concomitantly improving educational gains/student achievement.

Background

Research has identifies the following as factors clearly linked to poverty in Black urban communities: low education attainment, low wage job development, high unemployment overall, disinvestment of urban areas and low social capital (Mauldin & Mimura, 2001; Massey & Fischer, 2003). Several theoretical frameworks inform how an agency might approach the issue of poverty for Black urban residents (Adelman & Jaret, 1999). Micro and mezzo level theories consider an individual's characteristics and social networks, while macro level theories formulate around concepts of structural factors, such as residential and economic segregation (Adelman & Jaret, 1999; Gittell & Tibaldi, 2010; Imbroscio, 2004; Jargowsky, 1996; McClure, 2008). CAAAB is a unique organization that works at all three levels, and while no one empirically based anti-poverty model prevails, minority business development as an economic growth model has a significant body of research behind it as an effective method for reducing the rates of poverty and the economic segregation of African American urban communities (Herring, 2004).

Analysis of current employment trends have shown that the growth of high level consultation and technology positions has elevated educational requirements for most workers, resulting in an "hourglass" job market, with positions available at only the very top and bottom of the wage spectrum (Adelman & Jaret, 1999; Servon & Nelson, 2001). Under these current conditions, economic growth has been identified as a critical need for poor urban areas, specifically metropolitan African American communities. Higher success rates in small business ventures, however, correlate with specific planning, professional advice and resources (Lussier, 1995). The focus across much of small business literature is on a broad range of entrepreneurial skills, tools and social capital when measuring indicators of success. These concepts refer to everything from start up monetary capital to social support. What is evident, however, is that more of any of these "resources" offers better outcomes for small business development (Cole, 2003; Lussier, 1995; Schmidt & Kolodinsky, 2006).

Theories & Practices: Consulting

In order to assist CAAAB in transitioning to a new consulting model, analysis of various consulting methods was conducted to ensure that the model in place best served CAAAB's diverse member businesses and their unique needs. The Institute of Management Consultancy (IMC) defines consulting as "the service provided to business, public and the other undertakings by an independent and qualified person" (Ajmal et al., 2009). More specific definitions have included ideas of the consultant's specialization, training and qualification; the role of the consultant as assistant, bridge, architect, physician and expert; and common actions of the consultant to identify, analyze, steer, design, solve, monitor, recommend, assist and implement (Ajmal et al., 2009; Leong and Huang, 2008; Old, 1995). Others have accentuated the centrality of knowledge networking. For many clients and consultants, however, "the concept...remains nebulous and difficult to define" (Ajmal et al., 2009).

Perhaps a driving force for the lack of a useful, agreed-upon definition is the growing need for consultants to respond to increasing diversity among businesses and entrepreneurs. Workforce 2020 projected "by the year 2020, White non-Hispanic workers will occupy only 68% of the total U.S. working population, whereas Asian, Hispanic, and Black workers are expected to constitute 6%, 14%, and 11%, respectively" (Judy and D'Amico, 1997). The field of consultancy has responded to these trends by directing more attention to diversity and multiculturalism in research and practice (Leong and Huang, 2008).

CAM-PC

Leong and Huang (2008), at the forefront of modern consulting, have addressed these perceived gaps by developing the CAM-PC Model (Cultural Accommodation Model-Process Consulting). They have integrated two prominent theories: Schein's Process Consulting model, defined by a collaborative client-consultant relationship; and Kluckhohn and Murray's tripartite framework for cross-cultural therapy, structured around three dimensions of human behaviour [the universal (U), the group (G), and the individual (I)] (Leong and Huang, 2008).

Kluckhohn and Murray proposed, "Every man [sic] is in certain respects a) like all other men, b) like some other men, and c) like no other man" (as cited in Leong and Huang, 2008). Central to this construct is a sophisticated understanding of the multidimensional design of human beings and thus, the multidimensional composition inherent in every human organization. The universal (U) dimension acknowledges some aspects of human behaviour and personality as common to all human beings. The group (G) dimension acknowledges "that most individuals are like some other individuals, suggesting the importance of social grouping, whether that grouping is based on culture, race, ethnicity, gender or social class" (Leong and Huang, 2008). The individual (I) dimension asserts some aspects of human behaviour and personality are unique to the individual and are therefore, not duplicated by any other human (Leong and Huang, 2008).

Transferred to consultancy, any effective model must apply all three dimensions of human behaviour to that of organizations. If consultancy models fail to address all three dimensions (U, G, or I), they will ignore one or both of the other behavioural dimensions of the business. Most relevant to CAAAB, “the universalist approach is only culturally validated for the original group on which the theory was developed (i.e., White European Americans) but of limited cultural validity for racial and ethnic minority groups without specifically being validated on those groups” (Leong and Huang, 2008). Similarly, models addressing the G dimension, “based on a culture assimilation approach will be of limited value cross-culturally and when applied to racial and ethnic minority groups” (Leong and Huang, 2008).

This framework necessitates three key questions for the consultant applying the CAM:

- (1) What aspects of the consultation model or theory in question can be considered culture general and be extended to other cultural groups beyond the dominant culture?
- (2) What aspects of the theory are culture specific to the dominant culture and should not be generalized or imposed on other cultural groups?
- (3) Are there experiences of racial and ethnic minority groups, represented as culture-specific constructs that are not captured within the theory? (Leong and Huang, 2008)

Implied in this approach is that any competent consultant will explore evidence-based models, conduct an extensive review of cultural variables, and develop a working understanding of the organization and its members in the current and historical environment.

Integrating the CAM with Schein’s Process Consultation, a consultant not only keeps these three ideas central to the consultancy process, but also offers them to the client for consideration and collaboration. In Schein’s PC model, the consultant “[helps] the organization help itself” (Leong and Huang, 2008). The consultant does not place himself/herself in a position to diagnose and prescribe, nor to sell expertise and transfer all knowledge necessary to solving the dilemma. This builds adaptability into the consultancy process and preserves space to deal with ambiguity, to discover knowledge together and to co-diagnose, all of which are key components of this model.

Overall, the PC process allows the client and consultant, together, to discover and address mental models embedded in processes, by creating a space to engage cultural variables. An integration of these models, then, takes shape in the sense that no consultant will understand enough about G level factors to recommend thorough solutions in an organizational context. As such, Leong and Huang (2008) “argue that only through mutual exploration between the consultant and the client can hypotheses about the source of the problems be formulated and tested from the U level to the G level.” Leong and Huang (2008) summarize the integrated model as “PC adjusted for cultural gaps,” making this model all the more relevant to CAAAB’s diverse member businesses.

Other Models

From models based on “the theory of constraints” to more recent approaches, such as “critical consulting,” most have been formulated and placed into practice without thorough evaluation (Davidsson and Klofsten, 2003). Most available consulting tools are limited because they fall into one of three categories: based on research, [with an] ability to generalize but not action oriented (quantitative, prediction-oriented models); based on research but with unknown ability to generalize and [varying] degree of action orientation (qualitative or understanding-or action oriented research); or, not research based but action oriented (e.g., how-to literature) (Davidsson and Klofsten, 2003).

In this way, the CAM-PC model is weak, as are most models, which may exist as practical directives yet lack an applicable, empirical base for the constellation of advice. For example, the stages of change theory became the basis of multiple consultancy models in the 20th century. RHR International Company integrated the prominent principle into its consultancy practice and developed a team of psychologists within the agency. In practice, leaders at RHR attempted to cross-cut three arenas of psychological change [mindset (rational-analytic), motivation (emotional-intuitive dynamic), and behaviour (capability)] with three stages of change management (defining the challenge, working through the challenge, and attaining and sustaining improvement) (Winum, et al, 1997). Although their proposed model addressed the basic psychology of change and acknowledged a need for practicality, it failed to offer a framework for cultural consideration, making it ineffective for many populations.

Dianna R. Old (1995), of the RAE group in Ann Arbor, Michigan, contrasts the phase-model approach with a “whole system” examination of embedded patterns. This whole system approach to organizational change is applied at the transactional, systemic, and deep structure levels (Old, 1995). It is this final level, deep structure, according to Old, which consultancy practices rarely address. Old proposes a general integration of methodologies hypothesized to work at the level of “deep structure” yet link across all three levels. In Old’s view, the following elements surface as foundational to the general body of consultancy methodology and as relevant for work at all three levels: Partner with leader (similar to PC), contextualize change (similar to CAM), navigate the critical path, bring wholeness into the design process, build dynamic processes and pathways (Old, 1995). In many ways, Old’s model is too general. With the exception of calling for analysis at the deep structural level, Old gives limited direction to consultants. Although there are some similarities to the CAM-PC Model, this approach fails to specifically address culture.

Researcher Klaasjan Visscher (2006) might critique models such as Old’s and RHR’s, but for reasons different than those of Davidsson and Klofsten. Visscher’s (2006) study found that “consultants appear to be improvising bricoleurs, tailoring their ways of working to specific situations, and using heterogeneous and partly implicit repertoires, which are built...mainly through action-learning. This requires another kind of methodology and another kind of training.” Visscher (2006) also

concluded, “The competence of consultants shows in their ability to adapt standard ways of working to specific contexts, not in their ability to make specific situations fit a standard way of working.” Visscher might add to Davidsson and Kloftsen’s recognition of the need for empirically valid, applicable models, a call for examining critical factors of consultant competence (Visscher, 2006).

Comprehensive Business Development Agencies

When tailoring a consulting package to the needs of a specific community, agencies often choose to employ an approach that combines technical assistance with other capital building methods, such as social and business networking. A good example of an organization that has combined social capital building with consulting is the Metropolitan Economic Development Association (MEDA). Formed in 1971, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, MEDA engages the very issues CAAAB seeks to address—namely, “supporting the creation and development of minority owned businesses...to lead minorities into mainstream economic life and to provide them with equal economic opportunities” (MEDA, 2011). MEDA, like nearly all business consultation services, does not divulge the various components of its business consultation model. A further examination of MEDA and its other core services (e.g., Loan Packaging and Financing, Assistance with Certification Application, Training/Leadership Development, Networking) might also serve as a viable model from which CAAAB can address the aforementioned issues.

Theories & Practices: Networking

Building “Strategic Alliances”

Organizations and programs that specialize in the development, growth and sustainment of African American small business enterprise and entrepreneurial ventures often develop missions and goals that extend beyond measures of individual business success in the market place. In addition to increasing the revenues and longevity of businesses and entrepreneurial ventures, there is a strong desire to uplift African American communities. CAAAB promotes that, in addition to providing access to a range of business services, membership fees will go toward increasing the wealth of African American families and developing “a new generation of interdependent and talented young African American business leaders” (CAAAB.org).

Approaches to supporting the wealth and well-being of African American communities through business development have largely focused on increasing human capital in the form of skills, education and financial capital (i.e. access to credit). These efforts include activities such as the provision of technical assistance, job training, school-based programming, financial planning, and micro-lending.

Although these services do provide resources that are important for the success of small businesses (Valdez, 2008), they are not sufficient in order to overcome the unique barriers present in African American businesses which are often held in place by structures of discrimination. Researchers of a program in Louisville, Kentucky aptly described this situation as such:

Traditional minority development strategies have erred in their singular focus on capital without recognizing the critical need for a supportive social infrastructure as an integral part of micro-enterprise incubation, and these strategies have not incorporated the elimination of social cost into their frameworks (Durr, Lyons & Cornwell, 2000, p. 63).

The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) published a report specifically outlining how minority businesses can increase their competitive edge by forming “strategic alliances” (Greenhalgh, 2008). A business relationship meets the classification of strategic alliance when 1) there is a commitment beyond an initial transaction, 2) it allows an enterprise to get business that may have gone elsewhere and 3) it is mutually beneficial. These alliances are on the more complex end of a spectrum of business relationships ranging from simple contracts to acquisition; and minority enterprises often do not utilize them until later in their life cycles (Greenhalgh, 2008). All of these forms of business networking endeavor to increase social capital, which is the capacity to leverage one’s networks, business and otherwise, for personal gain (Cochrane, 2010). Due to the degree to which economic and non-economic action are interlinked, African American business owners, are often cut off from majority institutions that would increase access to business

opportunities. Granovetter has developed the term “social embeddedness” to describe the ways in which economic activity is dependent upon noneconomic social, cultural and political institutions.

In social network theory, Granovetter (1973) makes a distinction between strong ties and weak ties. The former consists of close relationships like friends and family and the latter with acquaintances. While strong ties provide quick connections to business with low transaction costs and higher amounts of trust, weak ties can serve as bridges to new circles of information, innovation and resources (Granovetter, 1973). If business owners always work in the same embedded relationships, they may not be able to adapt and grow. Questions remain about the applicability of weak ties as bridges for African American businesses, because research has not found them to be as advantageous for populations with lower socio-economic status (as cited by Rhodes). Nonetheless, until more weak ties are drawn to larger pools of resources, African American businesses will continue to lack a competitive edge in the mainstream market.

Social Media & Technology

It has become increasingly apparent that in order to survive, small businesses must take advantage of the networking resources available through social media and technology. Social media sites provide an inexpensive solution to reaching a broader, yet targeted, audience for forming business relationships. According to a recent article on professional networking sites, “LinkedIn is saturated with some of the world’s top decision makers, and the company says that at least one executive from every top 500 company is present on its site” (Talbert, 2011). The access provided to these smaller businesses through social media has significantly broadened the potential for small business visibility and indirectly sustainability.

However, these social networking outlets must be used effectively in order to optimize results. According to Lacho and Marinello (2010) the following best practices make for the most efficient and effective use of social media/ networking technologies:

1. **Be focused:** know why you are networking and with whom you would like to network
2. **Do not just make “social” connections:** concentrate on cultivating professional relationships
3. **Limit time spent on social media**
4. **Add value to the conversations engages in on sites:** information posted should share something new about the entrepreneur or product
5. **Pay attention to your contact’s network:** continually cultivate “weak ties”

Member Survey Analysis

In order to better understand the nuanced networking needs of CAAAB member businesses, a brief survey specific to networking (Appendix A) was administered to seven participating businesses via focus groups and phone conversations. Aggregate data results from the surveys can be found in Appendix B. Focus group transcripts can be found in Appendix C. The businesses surveyed were representative of a number of industries including: information technology, advertising/ market consulting, sales and non-profit/ social services. There was a relatively even distribution in regards to organizational life cycle, with businesses ranging from start-up to 10 years in operation. While several of the businesses indicated that they participate in outside organizational functions and networking opportunities, very few were active members of organizations outside of CAAAB.

As previously explained, numerous studies have indicated the importance of specific forms of social and professional networking in the development of small and/or minority businesses (Granovetter, 1973), CAAAB member responses to networking challenges further reinforced the need for “strategic” and intentional relationship building when establishing a small business. Given the organizational cycle differences of CAAAB members, current CAAAB networking strategies have received mixed reviews. A recognized benefit of CAAAB’s current networking model, facilitating networking opportunities within the small minority business circuit, is shared understanding around financial and social challenges unique to minority businesses. The camaraderie and understanding that occurs during CAAAB monthly meetings and similar minority events has helped to ease apprehension by several members around operational struggles. However, it was also expressed that the more homogenous networking pool limits member businesses’ ability to connect with larger, well established firms and potential clientele which could aid in future growth and financial stability. Members would like to see CAAAB continue linking small minority businesses in an intentional manner, while also making “warm” introductions of member organizations to key players in the St. Louis business world.

In addition to increasing opportunities for “weak tie” networking, those surveyed placed great emphasis on the growth and importance of social media and networking in the small business world. All member businesses surveyed had a website, Facebook or LinkedIn page through which they both advertised their product and formed professional relationships. All businesses acknowledged the increasingly positive role that social media has played in increased connectivity for small minority businesses. Many of the businesses, however, indicated their limited capacity for taking full advantage of these new networking resources. A strong desire for more effective use of current media by their own businesses as well as greater activity/ visibility of CAAAB through social media was iterated.

Strategies and Recommendations: Consulting

Through an in-depth interview with a prototypical CAAAB member business (Appendix D), a review of relevant literature and the member business interviews, several recommendations were identified to assist CAAAB in providing effective consulting opportunities to member businesses. The survey responses were particularly relevant to CAAAB's future decisions in providing or facilitating consultation.

Marketing. Half of the six respondents contacted regarding consulting had 20 years or more of business ownership, and 57 percent indicated marketing as his/her priority focus if he/she were provided with consulting today. Seventy-one percent reported annual revenue of \$50,000 or less, perhaps reinforcing the need for training in inexpensive social media marketing outlets. Overall, this indicates a need for member access to consulting services with a consultant experienced in low-cost and targeted marketing who can make effective use of free or low-cost social media outlets.

PC-CAM integration. It is recommended that future consultants contracted to work with CAAAB member businesses align with the guiding principles of the Process Consulting with the Cultural Accommodation Model. The model as previously discussed, will provide the most effective process for consulting with CAAAB's diverse small businesses. The following outlines the basic principles as taken directly from the 2008 Leong and Huang article and are their cultural-accommodation adaptation of Schein's guiding principles.

Consultant-Client Relationship

1. Always try to be helpful.
2. It is the client who owns the problem and the solution.
3. When in doubt, share the problem.

Information Collection

1. Always stay in touch with the current reality and consider where behaviors fall on the three U, G, and I dimensions.
2. Assess your ignorance pertaining to the U, G, and I dimensions and actively seek to attain knowledge.
3. Go with the flow and identify the gaps. This includes understanding "the client's motivation and personality to assist consulting," as well as understanding gaps in the consultant's understanding of the U, G, and I dimensions.
4. Everything is a source of data to enlighten accommodation; errors are inevitable in testing hypotheses about U, G, and I dimensions—learn from them.

Intervention

1. Everything you do is an intervention; consider beforehand and observe afterward at least the effects on the U dimension and the G dimension.
2. Timing is crucial.

3. Be constructively opportunistic with confrontative interventions while keeping in mind cultural differences. (Leong & Huang, 2008)

Consultant qualities. Based on a review of various consultancy models and member interviews, it is recommended that CAAAB seek the following core qualities of a consultant for any future consultation with its member businesses (based on Schein's model of Process Consulting): Consultant should be focused on the process of discovery with the client, not focused on diagnosing a particular problem or offering expertise in problems/solutions, consultant creates a relationship with client that "permits the client to... perceive, understand, and act on the *process events* that occur in the client's *internal and external* environment in order to improve the situation *as defined by the client*", consultant does not develop a fixed idea of problem(s)/solution(s) during the consultancy process, especially during early stages of consultancy relationship.

Additionally, the consultant should be aware of the Universal, Group, and Individual dimensions of culture, as discussed previously, and keep these dimensions central to the consultancy process, from beginning to end. An appropriate consultant is able to aptly distinguish aspects of the business and business owner. Most relevant, perhaps, is a caution against two assumptions when consulting with members businesses: Assuming "universalistic characteristics on people who exhibit certain characteristics unique to a group" and assuming "a commonly found [group] dimension to be uniform among individuals with that group's membership". All CAAAB member businesses have very different needs in knowledge, growth and support and the CAM-PC model incorporates the need for any consultant working with CAAAB member businesses to fully understand the greater and individual context of each business. A consultant questionnaire has been developed for CAAAB to utilize when interviewing potential consultancy agencies, in addition to a post-consulting survey for member businesses to assist CAAAB in measuring the outcomes of consultancy (See Appendices E&F).

Additional Consulting Recommendations

According to the focus group and survey results, a significant portion of CAAAB members have annual revenue under \$50,000. It is recommended that CAAAB consider attempting to identify potential consulting services for those member businesses that have less disposable revenue but require more in-depth consulting through an extended, long-term relationship. Two such opportunities are available through Washington University's Olin School of Business.

Olin experience community-based teaching and learning. The Olin Business school has developed a new program in conjunction with the Gephardt Institute for Public Policy that allows business students to engage enterprises in an experiential community-based consulting project. The participating businesses will be given a team of 3-5 students for one semester to help solve a challenge the business is currently facing.

Taylor consulting program. The Olin Business School's Center for Experiential Learning also offers a free consulting program for local nonprofits. This project also provides a team of 3-5 Business School students that dedicate 75 hours over six weeks to the participating agency. These students are participating outside of a credit based class and are selected on specific abilities. This project may be better suited to assist CAAAB directly on implementation of contracted consulting services, measurement and tracking, networking and capacity building (<http://www.olin.wustl.edu/cel/Pages/default.aspx>).

Strategies and Recommendations: Networking

Since separating from Black Leadership Roundtable in May of 2010, CAAAB has been actively building its board of directors and establishing strategic partnerships with several organizations. They are currently partnered with Justine Petersen Housing and Redevelopment Corporation on an Emerging Markets Loan Fund and the development of an enterprise center to house 25 small businesses on Grand Avenue. In October 2011 they received a demonstration grant from Incarnate World Foundation for the Parents as Entrepreneurs Program to partner with Clay School and Epsilon Lambda Foundation. They collaborate with Better Family Life and Grace Hill, community health and social service organizations serving the St. Louis Metropolitan Region, as well as local colleges and universities to determine how to better support the employees and families of member businesses to remove external social barriers to success. Recommendations to build on these partnerships stem from research and feedback from member businesses.

Social media and technology. CAAAB has recognized the technology needs of their members and was successful in obtaining a Gateway to Opportunities Micro Investment Grant. This revenue, directed at computer access and technology training for members, can help the organization to bolster its networking among members and to the broader community. CAAAB has had a LinkedIn account since December of 2010, and currently has only two members listed. During focus group discussion and one-on-one interviews several member businesses addressed the importance of social media, especially LinkedIn, as professional networking tools and reinforced the need for CAAAB to build on its existing social media presence. The following are technology options that would support CAAAB in expanding its presence while giving member businesses more targeted information which would be useful in their networking and business development. The specifics of CAAAB's current technological capacities and future goals should dictate the program that would be most beneficial and feasible for implementation.

E-mail marketing software. The information available on CAAAB's current resources and research on programs available to support communications within and among businesses suggest that email marketing software may be the best way for CAAAB to increase the social presence and better connect member businesses. Members mentioned receiving emails from Mr. Davis. Email marketing software could assist CAAAB in scaling up their messages and sending out targeted

messaging to members and other contacts thru the creation of targeted lists based on members' industries, stage of growth, interests, etc.

Constant Contact is one example program (www.constantcontact.com). In addition to creating targeted lists, it allows managers to schedule messages to be delivered at the times their recipients are most likely to receive them and track who has read emails, forwarded them on and opened links. This program enables people to sign up on your mailing list from a "Join our Mailing List" button on the organizational web site and connect with social media networks on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Online rating sites have commended this particular program for its customer service and most professional layouts. Pricing for this software license starts at \$15 per month for list serves with 500 or less email addresses. Some additional email marketing software programs include: GetResponse, MailChimp, GraphicMail, Vertical Response, Benchmark Email and Emma.

Collaboration software. Microsoft SharePoint 2010 is an example of a web based business collaboration software that enables organizations to tailor a shared platform to improve communications and information sharing among members. Basic features allow members to coordinate schedules, organize documents, and participate in discussions. The Foundation platform is available as a free download on Microsoft's site (<http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx>). Pricing for SharePoint varies depending on the specific package organizations use to tailor to their business needs. The Standard and Enterprise editions offer extended features and capabilities. Furthermore, NewsGator has partnered with Microsoft to provide "enterprise social business solutions" via social computing platforms (<http://www.newsgator.com>). These platforms offer a range of networking abilities, including: creating Social Sites communities for external and internal stakeholders to work together on projects or initiatives, activities streams that filter information from SharePoint and external social media streams, and tracking capabilities. Additional marketing and technology resources include Elasticity (<http://goelastic.com/optimize/>) and 501 (c)reative (<http://www.501creative.com/clients/client-list/civic>).

Strategic partners & events. Feedback from CAAAB member business surveys indicated a strong need for CAAAB to increase member access to key business representatives in the St. Louis Metropolitan region. Based on the "strong ties" "weak ties" research of Mark Granovetter (1973), most individuals are capable of accessing and leveraging their familial and community relationships (strong ties), but few realize that business success and growth, especially for small businesses, is heavily reliant on the formation of connections and relationships outside of one's immediate networking pool (weak ties). Acknowledging this as a driving force in the success of CAAAB's members, it is recommended that CAAAB begin actively cultivating relationships with larger, well established members of the St. Louis business community through event sponsorship, event attendance and non-traditional synergies. The events and organizations included in Appendix G are representative of the types of partnerships and activities that may help grow CAAAB's visibility in

the business community, while introducing them to well connected CEOs and executive directors. Not all of the events listed have obvious connections to CAAAB, which is often the nature of a weak tie. However, all of the organizations included either hold events or workshops, have influential executive and board members, or are instrumental in policy decisions which significantly impact the business community.

Community Involvement

According to the Small Business Administration (SBA), small businesses are truly the backbone of society, making up 99.7 percent of employer firms, employing over half of all private sector employees, and generating 64 percent of net new jobs over the past 15 years. As leaders in job creation and employment, growth in the small business sector has been identified as a potential solution to increasing unemployment rates, visible gaps in commercial and sales tax revenue, and underperforming schools in Black urban communities. As indicated in both CAAAB's macro mission and the feedback received by surveyed member businesses, community development and involvement are recognized as high priorities.

A lot of Black businesses don't give back...Entrepreneurs don't reach out and help others

-CAAAB Member Business

[The] only reason we're here is to help someone else...[we need to] share that message to keep community strong

-CAAAB Member Business

In order to gauge whether or not these stated objectives are in fact addressed through current CAAAB practices it is recommended that a measurement be established that will enable CAAAB to assess the impact that member businesses are having on the communities in which they reside. Referenced in Appendix H, a map of all member business locations may act as a first step to developing indicators of impact, as well as determining the businesses scope of impact. Additional information to inform this mission includes: concentration of businesses, primary clientele served, percent revenue which remains in the community, etc.

Research Limitations

While there is a large body of theoretical literature available which addresses the development of small business consultation, details surrounding implementation and rigorous evaluation is relatively sparse, especially as it relates to minority populations. Based on the information gathered from relevant literature and documentation of the proposed CAAAB facilitation model, there appears to be relatively little inconsistency between stated best practices and CAAAB's new design. However, without conducting a full analysis of the implementation of the new CAAAB model it is difficult to provide specific and targeted recommendations regarding the improvement or effectiveness of the model. It is recommended that a measurement tool be adopted (see Appendix E) prior to implementation of the new consultation model and that a thorough evaluation be conducted annually to track progress.

Conclusion

Addressing poverty issues in the African American community is a nuanced and challenging endeavor. CAAAB must be commended for its unfailing dedication to making significant changes to the individual lives of their members as well as the surrounding community. There is little doubt that CAAAB provides a much needed service to the St. Louis area African American community and it is with great anticipation that those involved in this research await the results of this newly designed consulting model. The recommendations provided in this paper attempt to expand upon the excellent work being done by CAAAB in areas which form a comprehensive method of assisting minority businesses; both networking and direct consulting work appear to be at the core of every holistic approach to small enterprise development and economic growth. Given the excellent feedback received from CAAAB members and their dedication to the improvement of African American communities, it is the hope of the research group that the aforementioned recommendations advance CAAAB's mission.

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Appendix A
CAAAB Business Survey Template

Business Name: _____

Owner Name: _____ Industry Type: _____

Business Location: _____

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Business Size (number of employees): _____

Annual Revenue: *Check the box that applies*

- ☐ Below \$50,000
- ☐ \$50,000- \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000- \$499,999
- ☐ \$500,000- \$999,999
- ☐ \$1 million- \$2 million
- ☐ Over \$ 2 million

Years in operation: _____ Years as a member of CAAAB: _____

Please check “yes” or “no” for the following questions:

1. Do you live in the community where your business is located?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Do you have personal ties to individuals in the community where your business is located?

Yes ☐ No If yes, explain (*optional*) _____

Please circle the response that most accurately describes your position on the following statement(s):

It is important for my business to strengthen the local community.

1

2

3

4

Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat

Agree Somewhat

Strongly Agree

Please place a check mark beside all agencies in which you have been a part of: (C= currently a member/ participant, 3yrs= member/ participant within the last 3 years)

C 3yrs

- ☐ ☐ St. Louis Minority Business Council
- ☐ ☐ Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis
- ☐ ☐ St. Louis Enterprise Centers
- ☐ ☐ 100 Black Men of Metropolitan St. Louis
- ☐ ☐ St. Louis Chapter: Sororities

C 3yrs

- ☐ ☐ Women’s Chamber of Commerce
- ☐ ☐ Black Leadership Roundtable
- ☐ ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ ☐ St. Louis Chapter: Fraternities

Appendix B

CAAAB Business Survey Results

Respondents: 7 Total

Walter Pritchard- Soaring High Media Group

Tyrone Lott- STL MobileTech

LeVone Miles- Transitional Housing Facility

Keith Turner- TurnGroup Technologies

Joseph Robnett- Start Up and Go!

Ed McFowland- Keeper, Inc.

Al Parks- Divine Dzion, Inc.

Industry Type:

Technology: 2

Advertising/ Marketing: 1

Non-profit: 2

Retail/ Sales: 1

Construction: 1 (transitioning to consulting)

Business Size (number of employees):

1-5: 4

6-10: 2

11-15: 0

16-20: 1

Annual Revenue:

Below \$50,000: 5

\$50,000- \$99,999: 1

\$100,000- \$499,999: 1

Years in operation:

< 1: 2

1-5: 3

6-10: 2

Years as a member of CAAAB:

< 1: 2

1-5: 4

6-10: 1

Please *check* “yes” or “no” for the following questions:

1. Do you live in the community where your business is located?

Yes: 5

No: 2

2. Do you have personal ties to individuals in the community where your business is located?

Yes: 7

No: 0

If yes, explain (*optional*):

- 25 years in the community
- Several employees live within STL city limits.
- Many customers and business relationships in City
- Family, friends and associates

Please *circle* the response that most accurately describes your position on the following statement(s):

It is important for my business to strengthen the local community.

1: 0

2: 0

3: 0

4: 7

Strongly Disagree

Disagree Somewhat

Agree Somewhat

Strongly Agree

Please place a *check mark* beside all agencies in which you have been a part of: (*C= currently a member/ participant, 3yrs= member/ participant within the last 3 years*)

St. Louis Minority Business Council: 1

Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis: 2

St. Louis Enterprise Centers: 0

100 Black Men of Metropolitan St. Louis: 2

St. Louis Chapter: Sororities: 0

St. Louis Chapter: Fraternities: 0

Women's Chamber of Commerce: 0

Black Leadership Roundtable: 1

Other: 1 (Empowerment Network)

Appendix C

Focus Group Feedback

1. Can you tell us about your business/ social networking experience in the St. Metropolitan Region?

- Attend workshops and networking
- Events have not been beneficial. People that are there are also struggling
- Difficult to get in with larger companies
- Larger companies looking for even larger companies. Chicken and the egg
- Interested in networking with established businesses.
- Networking circles are tight knit.
- Financial situation doesn't allow for mentoring or following up with other struggling businesses
- Political partnerships have been difficult (not NIMBY)
- No local political support (trying to be careful about how they partner because of issues)
- "Business Networking is VERY important to any business"
- "Need business networking events, not social networking...I don't have time for date night or to party."
- "I choose events based on opportunity value and who is creating the opportunity"
- "Events I try to get to include CAAAB events...try to make 6 a year...Business Networking Breakfast 1 to 2 times a year....SBA events sometimes...I get friends together that are business focused...I take initiative...I just introduced an up-and-coming attorney to another and they are doing some work together. I didn't get anything out of it this time, but in the future..."
- Meeting with Eddie on weekly basis for business plan
- Learned of 100 Black Men / Empowerment network
- Good partnership opportunities, similar mission to 100 black men etc.
- Org. in North St. Louis realized they have to work together, waking people up
- Networked w/ orgs. outside of black community before CAAAB, city inspector for mowing acres, Normandy and Wellston. Code enforcement for Pagedale... Member of STL County Code Enforcement, Missouri Assoc. for Building Inspectors/ Relationships with inspectors and police officers
- Contacts not as strong since left inspector position
- LinkedIn , website, Facebook
- Not a big social media person... but need to get a little more involvement with media

2. What would you like to see/ what do you think has been missing in regards to networking opportunities for African American small business owners?

- System for businesses who complement each other that will categorically match people
- Encourage partnerships for mutual benefits. Resources
- Wouldn't use experience as a priority. Type of business/ industry and leadership
- Would not dictate how the partnership functions
- Pass on and reciprocate.
- Mentor program not a good idea. People that are just starting out and hiring, need growth use markers for mentoring that is focused. Won't extend if not focused
- Social media invaluable...If you want your business to blossom you have to go down that road
- Pleased with the amount of business thus far.
- Effective use of Facebook, LinkedIn, and twitter
- All a matter of time. 6 yrs ago had to have a website. Now mobile website. Google 99% pf searches done through mobile device.
- Social media makes it easier for small business. Great tool for small bus. To access larger firms and companies.
- A good network is hard to find without politics
- Must be careful who you do business with... Connections with good political supporters
- CAAAB has made intro. But did not want to rush into anything...Need to establish strong board (for non-profit org.)
- Recently found org./ website to help establish board (boardlinksstlouis.org)
- Not using social media... looked into LinkedIn. looking for board to open doors
- "Creating opportunities to build relationships with decision makers."
- "Linking bigger businesses to small and upstarts."
- "Connecting the decision makers to small businesses"
- Opportunity.. real opportunity not slight of hand
- In Jim Crow days there were ploys/ tactics used to keep power low in AA communities, a lot of that happens today
- Opportunity to utilize what you have...today there is a mandatory 25% minority part. in govt. contracts... but minority can't participate. I have attempted to be MB certified. Change the rules so that its impossible to meet criteria. Women Minority Bus. Are easier to get, because you have black and white women as opposed to black men,
- CAAAB connected DD with Pete Peterson at Wash U

- Avenues for speaking with other small businesses because [they] have the same issues/ challenges... Nice to know you are not the lone ranger
- Expand reach inside the social media market/ networking
- Help with expanding to retail market/ big box stores (matter of positioning)
- Retail difficult in current econ environment
- St. Louis difficult market of not politically connected... Government market
- Tried to market “green” sock but did not happen... need to know the “who’s who” and “what is what”
- CAAAB needs to do the “warm” introduction: great product pitch
- Develop relationships with bigger org. and connections in industry

3. What are the ways in which small African American owned businesses have given back/ can give back to local communities?

- Provide black parties
- Celebratory events
- Offering training programs
- Steve Harvey gave away 100 turkeys this morning
- Would it be good to have more yes, can they all...?
- CAAAB is doing a great job.
- Meet once a month.
- Has met quite a few CAAAB Members.
- Keeps everyone informed about new members or vital info. for members (as info. Arises)
- “Provide higher-level, professional services at an often lower price, based on need to prove themselves as well as their clientel...or added value”
- “Also, volunteer, or donate in-kind. I work as a mentor”
- CAAAB / Eddie is taking the time and sticking with businesses. Helped me get plan together
- Increase participation in the community
- Increase visibility in comm... Introduced through current CAAAB member. Wouldn’t have known about CAAAB otherwise.
- CAAAB members network within themselves
- First month introduced to other 21 members. Established mechanism for older members to take newer under their wing... sounds better on paper.
- Has had major problems (recovery, etc.) and couldn’t connect with other businesses.
- Would benefit from org. from outside of the black community
- No minority or AA owned businesses in community

- Black owned business need to give back... Help with starting businesses
- Talk with small business owners, someone they can relate to
- Share and mentor
- Only reason we're here is to help someone else...share that message to keep community strong
- A lot of Black businesses don't give back...Entrepreneurs don't reach out and help others
- Award dinners...same people, same thing but no follow up. Real org. and real connections
- Gives the dos and don'ts ... realistic message to entrepreneurs. Not just title or cash injection ... genuinely wants to help.
- Young lady told me they know people, but if you don't have their cell phone number...you don't know them. If I have to wait til 9 am to talk to them, and access gatekeeper. Just because there's a business card exchange

Appendix D**Case Study: TurnGroup Technologies**

Met with Company President/Founder: Keith Turner 11/8/11

Business Industry: Information Technology

Qualitative Data:

1. Timeline

TurnGroup Technologies began in Mr. Turner's home. Mr. Turner left his previous employer to begin his own firm at 27 in April of 2002. He began his business out of his home utilizing his own personal savings and relying on informal mentorship and encouragement. Previous employers, business associates and others provided moral support and advice. He then applied to participate in a small business incubator in 2004. He was attracted to the incubator for both mentoring opportunities, and lower overhead costs, including low rent. At the time, his company was already taking in revenues of approximately \$70,000 per year. The incubator provided infrastructure for expansion at a lower cost, but did not deem his business eligible for mentorship. His business plan was not considered strong enough to qualify for those services by the incubator. In May 2009, TurnGroup moved into a new location in downtown St. Louis, MO. It is a large commercial space that easily accommodates 6 employees with a waiting room, conference room and workspace.

Initially, Mr. Turner utilized personal connections and word of mouth marketing to build a client base. His second client was the firm he once worked for. Mr. Turner has relied and continues to rely extensively on his personal connections within the business community for business support and growth.

2. Description of services and *mission expansion*

Initially, TurnGroup began handling basic Tech support. Overtime, the service portfolio has expanded into various areas including procurement and installation of hardware and software, networking and system configuration, website design, development, consultation and programming. The evolution and progression appears to have been organic over time, and based on capacity. More recently, the firm has added phone applications and specialty media services including e-commerce and shopping carts. As an IT firm, the company must be flexible and constantly in flux to keep up with trends and technologies.

3. Describe industry placement.

Competitors include a variety of local IT companies. Mr. Turner did indicate a struggle with "maybe being too varied" in the services his firm offers. This indicates that he is working towards streamlining his approach to the general market. He explained that previously his firm has depended on small and start-up business, Mr. Turner would like to focus on developing partnerships with Prime Federal contractors. He feels as a subcontractor with a larger firm, he

would have larger and more reliable revenues. Market factors, including the recession, have effected his firm, but not significantly. As a service based company, he still has a significant portion of the market locally. Nonprofits and small businesses have been most effected by budget cuts and a slow economy, which are his core clients. Thus, this provides one more reason to focus on Federal subcontracts. He does, however, claim to have lower end prices. He felt this is a requirement based on his lack of connections. He repeatedly stated feeling he has “to prove himself”. Sometimes he described this as a direct result of small business markets, and other times as a component of being a new firm, and then he mentioned it in reference to being a black owned business.

4. Critical Issues of business:

Past – Utilized Business Incubator to access low cost space for growth and development. Needed built infrastructure while revenues were still under \$70,000 per year. The incubator assisted in growth by reducing overhead. Was not considered qualified, however, for business mentorship by the incubator because they did not feel the business plan was likely to succeed. Major mission shifts have been more frequent because of the nature of information technology. This has been difficult due to having the right equipment, organizational knowledge and employees in a variety of areas.

Current – Mr. Turner feels that his company must gain access to larger businesses and federal contracts. He does not feel that his small business clients may be sustainable in the long term. He is attempting to network with larger firms. His company currently lacks a true sales strategy.

Developing a strategy is his current priority.

In this market, although businesses may still be hiring for IT support, Mr. Turner feels that the demands made on his firm for efficiency and customer service are often unreasonable. He sometimes has to turn away work because a smaller company would like a project completed in an unreasonable amount of time, due to a desire to save money. Customers also expect his employees to go well above-and-beyond for them to keep their business and make it worth their expenditure. Mr. Turner feels that this is another reason he would like to work with larger firms.

Critical general issues - Mr. Turner identified three things as vital to business success for him and all small businesses:

1. Capitalization
2. Marketing and Sales
3. Relationships

Additionally Mr. Tuner feels that the relationships are even more vital to African American business owners. He stated that they often “need to prove themselves” through excellent customer service, effectiveness and efficiency.

Appendix E
Contracted Consultant Questionnaire

1. Please describe the relationship dynamic you generally have with your clients. What role do you play? What role does your client play in the consultation process?
2. What experience do you have working with African American (or minority) business owners?
3. As a consultant, would you describe yourself as a...
 - a. Physician
 - b. Expert
 - c. Explorer
 - d. Scientist
4. As a consultant, would you describe your clients' role as...
 - a. Patient
 - b. Recipient of expertise
 - c. Explorer
 - d. Case study
5. Please describe a client/business problem you have had in the past. Include in your description:
 - a. How the problem was discovered
 - b. How the solution was decided
 - c. How the solution was implemented
6. If this business problem and solution occurred in an African American-owned business, please describe*...
 - a. How the problem was understood in light of African American culture and business
 - b. How the solution was tailored to African American culture and business
 - c. How the implementation of the solution was constructed in relation to African American culture and business

**If the business problem and solution did not occur in an African American-owned business, please describe how the problem, solution, and implementation would be different in that setting.*

7. With that particular client, please briefly describe...
 - a. What characteristics of the business, *and* business owner, were generally common to all businesses and business owners
 - b. What characteristics of the business, *and* business owner, were common to a similar group of businesses and business owners
 - c. What characteristics were unique to that business alone, and to that business owner alone

Appendix F

Post-consultation Member Business Questionnaire

Overall, how would you rate the consulting experience?

Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

**Check the box (or boxes) that best describes the consultant who worked with you.
Check all that apply.**

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigator | <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Confusing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learner | <input type="checkbox"/> Team Player | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physician | <input type="checkbox"/> Listener | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expert | <input type="checkbox"/> Talkative | <input type="checkbox"/> Coach |

Circle the phrase on the “agreement continuum” that best describes how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

The consultant and I discovered a problem together.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant and I worked toward a solution together.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant identified the problem(s) in my business and told me how to solve the problem(s).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant diagnosed the problem(s) in my organization and gave me a “prescription” for fixing the problem(s).

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant did not need to ask me much about the problem or solution. The consultant seemed to be an expert in identifying the problem and creating a solution to that particular problem.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

When the consultant identified a problem(s) or solution(s), the consultant considered the unique challenges I have faced, and continue to face, as an African American business owner.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant and I discussed the challenges I face as an African American business owner.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant initiated conversation about the dynamics of African American business ownership.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

I initiated conversation with the consultant about the dynamics of African American business ownership.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant seemed to be able to identify with me.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant identified problems I already knew existed.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant understood the unique challenges I face as an African American.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The consultant asked me questions about being an African American business owner.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

My consultant often started sentences with, "Every business like this..."

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The solutions proposed by the consultant will allow me to maintain my cultural identity.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The solutions proposed by the consultant will require me to abandon parts of my culture to embrace the dominant culture.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Appendix G

Strategic Partners & Events

Diversity Awareness Partnership

2012 St. Louis Diversity Summit

Talent Pool: How St. Louis can be More Competitive in a Diverse Global Market

Presentation by Luke Visconti, CEO of [DiversityInc](#)

This event will bring together representatives from leading firms in the St. Louis Metropolitan Region to discuss the role of diversity in gaining and retaining a competitive advantage in the global business market.

Contact Person: Reena Hajat Carroll

Phone: (314) 436-7628

E-mail: rhajat@dapstl.org

St. Louis Regional Chamber & Growth Association

Breakfast with the Gazelles

“One of the St. Louis RCGA’s most successful Business Services programs, RCGA Breakfast with the Gazelles, is offered throughout the year and features leading business, entrepreneurial and regional leaders talking about issues and ideas that are important to entrepreneurs and those with the entrepreneurial spirit. They discuss the risks they’ve taken, their strategies for success, and the lessons they’ve learned.”

Contact Person: Lori Meier

Phone : (314) 444-1147

E-mail : gazelles@stlrcga.org

<http://www.stlrcga.org/documents/2011GazellesBrochure.pdf>

St. Louis Lupus Foundation¹

Urban Strategies & Advanced Resources

The LFA conducts educational, fund-raising and advocacy activities across the nation

This Year’s Event:

Lupus Tennis Shoe Ball- Sponsored by McCormack Baron Salazar & Urban Strategies

High stepping in our best tennis shoes at the creative black-tie *Tennis Shoe Ball*...that’s what will happen November 12th at the fabulous *Lumen*. More than two hundred community leaders dressed in formal attire and sporting tennis shoes as they bring awareness to the devastating effects of lupus, such as joint pain and swelling making even walking a challenge for many.

http://www.lupus.org/webmodules/webarticlesnet/templates/missouri_home.aspx

¹ Sandra Moore is the Executive Director of Urban Strategies and is living with Lupus. Urban Strategies, along with McCormack Baron Salazar and numerous other St. Louis corporations, co-sponsored the Lupus Tennis Shoe Ball

Emerson Climate Technologies**AHR Expo**

AHR Expo is an event where leading manufacturers and innovative suppliers showcase their latest products: from the most energy efficient systems and more sustainable building technology to state-of-the-art automation and controls, software, innovative tools, services, and much more.

Date: January 23, 2012 - January 25, 2012

Location: Chicago, Illinois

<http://www.emerson.com/en-US/newsroom/events/Pages/default.aspx>

St. Louis Business Diversity Initiative

Gateway Connections has been developed for professionals and their spouses or guests who have recently relocated to the St. Louis region. The program is designed to assist these professionals in making a smooth, knowledgeable transition to living in the St. Louis region. A one-day session has been designed to give the participants an opportunity to meet key business and community leaders and receive an extensive overview of the area's history, economics, structures, cultural affairs and leisure amenities. One of the program objectives is to allow participants to become acquainted with the formal and informal power structures of the area. In addition, the participants meet other professionals who have relocated to the area. The program goals are:

1. Introduce people of color who have recently relocated to the St. Louis region;
2. Offer a sampling of the area's major cultural, entertainment and recreational opportunities and venues;
3. Encourage the participants to become involved in community activities and civic groups;
4. Create a shared experience for the participants and
5. Allow the participants to meet and network with other professionals of color.

<http://www.stlbizdiversity.com/train/gateway-connections>

Civic Progress

Civic Progress is an organization of chief executives of [approximately 30 of the St. Louis region's largest businesses and employers](#). The group participates constructively in a select group of issues to improve the quality of community and business life and to help the region achieve world-class status. Membership is determined by the ability of the executive and his or her organization to commit time and resources toward these goals.

http://www.civicprogressstl.org/about_us/membership/

http://www.civicprogressstl.org/priority_areas/regionalism_connectivity/

St. Louis Business Expo

St. Charles Convention Center

Wednesday, March 14, 2012 · 11am-6pm

Get Connected. Get Informed. Get Registered!

Meet key decision makers, potential customers and suppliers and more One-on-One!

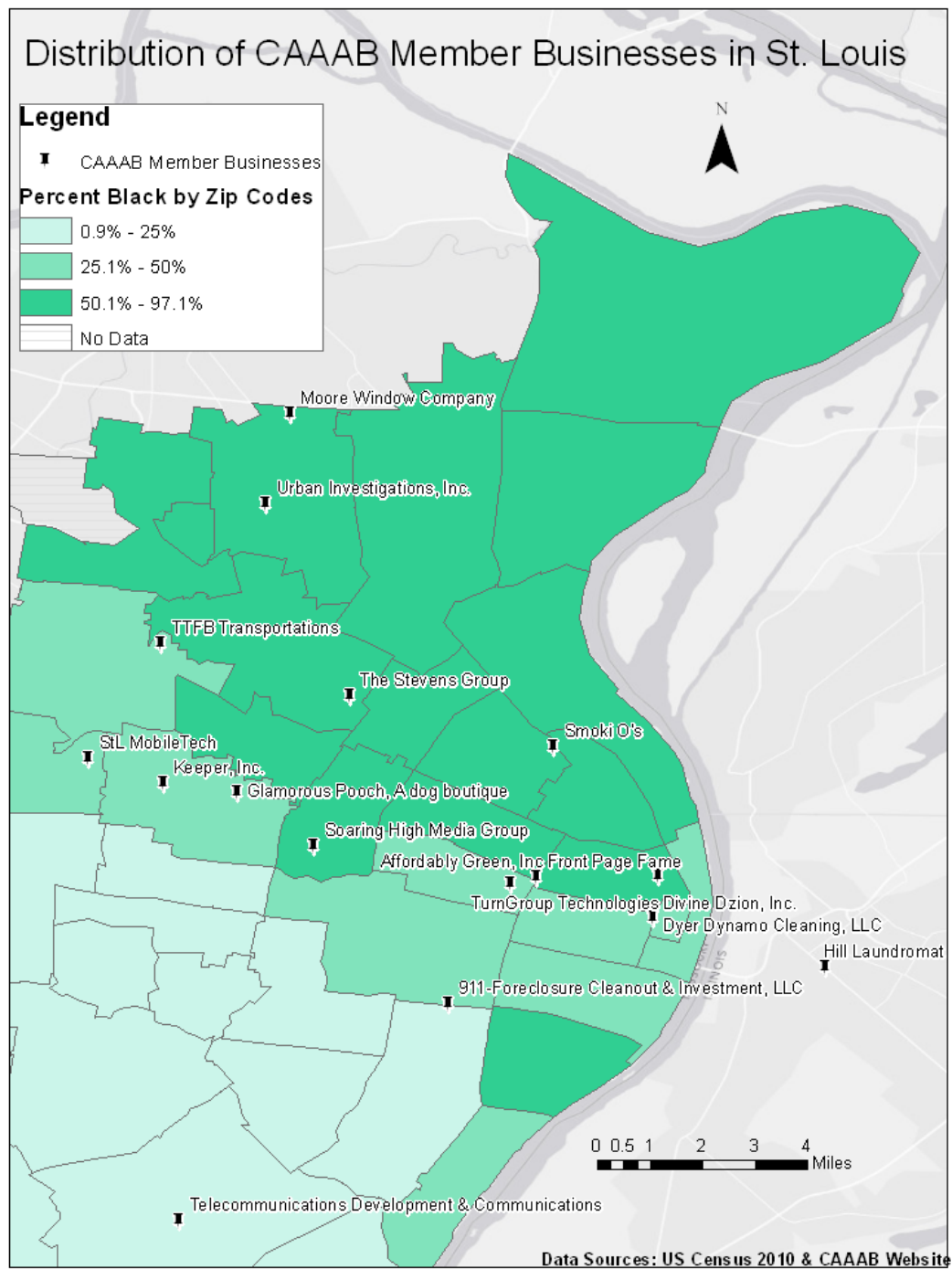
On March 14, 2012, area business leaders will gather at the St. Charles Convention Center in search of new products, connections and strategies. Be there to show what your company has to offer.

Booths are limited. Reserve your booth for the St. Louis Business Expo.

www.stlouisbusinessexpo.com/

Appendix H

Geographic Information Systems Map



² This map is a geographical representation of current CAAAB member businesses. Additional overlays may be constructed in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of neighborhood socioeconomic statistics, available resources, political presence, etc.