

SOUTHFIELD BUSINESS BEAT

Celebrating Black History Month by Highlighting Leadership, Innovation & Local Impact



Building Businesses, Community, and Generational Impact: Inside the National Entrepreneurs Association

This February, as we celebrate Black History Month, the City of Southfield is proud to spotlight the **National Entrepreneurs Association (NEA)**, a national nonprofit founded and led by Southfield resident and business leader Dr. Zalonya Allen. Through training, networking, and community-building, NEA helps entrepreneurs focus on what matters most: **building businesses that last**.

Founded in 2018 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, NEA was created to address a challenge Allen experienced firsthand — while many programs focus on helping entrepreneurs launch, far fewer help them sustain long-term success.

NEA works primarily with **business owners who have been operating for at least one year**, guiding them through a 9-week comprehensive training program designed to help entrepreneurs identify gaps, strengthen their foundation, and build for sustainable growth. The program blends practical business strategy with mindset and mental resilience, reflecting Allen's background as a former psychology professor.

“Launching isn't the problem. Longevity is.”

--Dr. Zalonya Allen, Founder of the NEA

Continued on Page 2



Ribbon Cutting Spotlight: Savvy Sliders

On January 22, 2026, the City of Southfield celebrated the grand opening of **Savvy Sliders at 26336 W Twelve Mile Rd** with a ribbon cutting and formal grand opening at the new location, welcoming another vibrant business to our local dining and retail community. Pictured here are Store Manager Aiden Sitto and co-owners Orlando Woods and Sam Sitto (not pictured is co-owner Harish Upputuri).

As part of a new City initiative, businesses that host a ribbon cutting with the City will also be invited to attend a City Council meeting for formal recognition, providing an added opportunity for visibility and community connection.

Learn more about ribbon cutting services and how to participate!



Entrepreneur Expo & Pitch Contest
Tues, March 24, 2026

4:30pm-7:30pm
Southfield Public Library
26300 Evergreen Rd, Southfield



Cash & Prizes
Networking
Refreshments
Vendors/Exhibitors

Learn More & Register
nationalentrepreneurs.org

Southfield Black Business Leaders to Know



The Power Couple:
Tenicia & Raymond Moulden

Tenicia Moulden serves as Owner of **Moulden Law** and President of the NAWBO Greater Detroit Chapter, while Raymond Moulden is the Owner of **Moulden Agency** and a 2025 Men of Excellence Awardee—together leading with advocacy, entrepreneurship, and community impact in Southfield.



The Global Business Force:
Leon C. Richardson

Founder, President, and CEO of **The Chemicco Group**, Richardson has grown a Southfield-based startup into an internationally recognized, multi-state enterprise employing hundreds and generating more than \$175 million in annual sales, driving workforce growth and supplier diversity.



The Industry Builder:
Vinnie Johnson

Founder, Chairman, and CEO of **The Piston Group**, Johnson launched the company in 1995 after a successful NBA career and grew it into a national automotive manufacturing enterprise, driving innovation, job creation, and long-term economic opportunity across Southeast Michigan and beyond.



248.796.4160



www.cityofsouthfield.com/business



businessdevelopment@cityofsouthfield.com



SouthfieldBizDev



Oakland County “Local Gems” in Southfield

At the end of 2025, Oakland County hosted its Local Gems Sweepstakes to spotlight standout small businesses across the region. In our inaugural Southfield Business Beat, we were proud to highlight Southfield’s Local Gems kickoff tailgate event, and we are excited to now recognize the top three recommended Southfield Local Gems — all Black-owned businesses — as noted on [Oakland County’s Local Gems website](#).

1

Hobby Town
21770 W Eleven Mile Rd
Harvard Row Plaza



Hobby Town celebrates 10 years in Southfield this August, owned by longtime resident Marvin Ballinger, with support from his wife Sima, and is a go-to destination for Detroit-area hobbyists with hands-on DIY events and an active community presence.

2

Irresistible Boutique
29201 Southfield Rd
Southfield Commons
Shopping Center



Irresistible Boutique owner Danielle Williams pairs fashion-forward style with community impact through events like coat drives and fun, in-store shopping experiences that bring Southfield shoppers together. She also models all the new fashions herself and looks fabulous doing it!

3

AM2PM Barber Shop
23930 W Nine Mile Rd
9-Telegraph Shopping Plaza



AM2PM Barber Shop, owned by Demayle Latham, has built a loyal following in Southfield and online as @kutzbymayle, earning rave reviews and cultivating a strong brand presence through fresh shop gear and community connection.

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Continued from Page 1

Across industries, NEA sees recurring challenges, including limited access to capital, lack of strong business networks, and insufficient mentorship. By creating structured programs, mastermind groups, and high-impact networking opportunities, NEA provides entrepreneurs with both the tools and the community needed to move forward with confidence.

One powerful example is Colette Hughes, Owner and Broker of Virtual Real Estate Services. After connecting with NEA, Hughes gained the clarity and confidence to launch her own firm. Within three years, she grew her business into a six-million-dollar operation and formed a partnership through an NEA connection that generated more than \$1 million in real estate transactions.

NEA’s work will be on display locally at the **Entrepreneur Expo & Pitch Contest on March 24** at the Southfield Public Library (see feature box on Page 1 for event details).

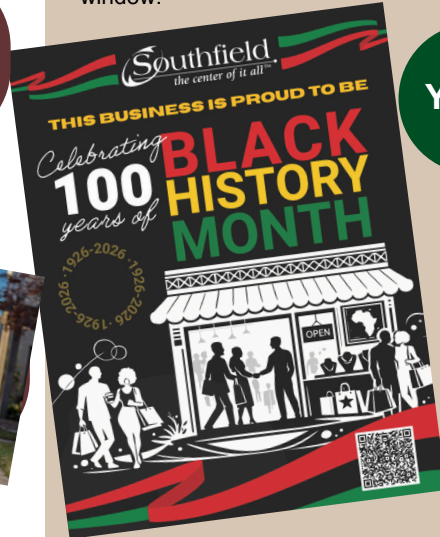
As a Black woman leading a national organization from Southfield, Allen sees representation as a powerful catalyst for change. “When women and minorities see me leading this organization, it lets them know that if I can be an entrepreneur, they can too,” she says.

NEA prides itself on being one of the most diverse groups in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, welcoming business owners from all backgrounds and creating a space where inclusion fuels collaboration and community stability.

Download & Display: Black History Month Window Poster

Show your support for Black History Month by downloading, printing, and displaying our official City of Southfield business poster in your storefront or business window.

Download
Your Poster
Here



Scan to learn
more about
the City’s
BHM Events

Upcoming Business Events & Opportunities

2/1-2/28: Black History Month Events (City of Southfield)

2/9: New Business Recognition by Southfield City Council (City of Southfield) @ 6pm, 26000 Evergreen Rd

2/10: Commercial Leasing for Business Owners - Virtual (Oakland Thrive)

2/16: Forming Your LLC or DBA - Webinar (Michigan SBDC)

2/24: The Magic of Hope: Customer Service with a Twist! (Tri Cities Business Network)

2/27: Edu2B Tech Collaboration - Business Networking (Oakland County)

Contact Us



Do you have a favorite local business we should feature? Suggestions are always welcome!

Please contact us!



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