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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

ANDY MIRACLE

Greetings to the Durham Community,

We are excited to publish Durham County Economic Development's first newsletter highlighting some of the great work happening in our community! Our mission includes promoting the economic equity and well-being of Durham County, and the stories that we share here will reflect those values. In this and future editions, Sabria Futrell, Economic Development Coordinator, will share updates on small business programming, focusing on MWBE vendors with a reoccurring featured business spotlight. Matt Filter, Economic Development Manager, will focus on business recruitment and local industry highlights; and I will share on some of the exciting workforce development efforts to better connect residents to excellent career pathways here in

Durham. Our first edition will include an interview with one of our first BULLS graduates, Armond Shaw, who is now working full-time at Biogen after getting his certificate in BioWork from Durham Tech!! We will also highlight the great work happening at Durham Success Summit, and share Maya Freelon's Durham Loan Fund Success Story. This edition will conclude by spotlighting Antonio Alanis Art and highlighting 2023's economic development announcements to date. Thank you for checking out our first edition, we hope you enjoy and that we will see you again.

With gratitude,

Andy Miracle

**Director of Economic Development,
Durham County**



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT

In 2020, the BULLS Life Sciences Academy was created to support the region's growing demand in biomanufacturing, as well as to help residents better compete for wealth-building career opportunities. This is accomplished through a training model that offers success coaching, engagement resources, and financial support while students pursue an industry certification at Durham Tech. Recent BULLS graduate, Armond Shaw, participated in a quick interview sharing on his experience and what he has been doing since. While serving as a temporary employee at Biogen, he applied for the BULLS program after learning about the benefits. Shaw, who attended North Carolina Central University, earned a full-time position as a manufacturing associate at Biogen after finishing the BULLS program. In that role, he makes medicines to improve people's health and quality of life. Here is what Armond had to say:

How has the BULLS-biotech changed your life?

The BULLS program has given me job security and an opportunity to touch other kids that may have been in my shoes (or worse) an opportunity to provide and be self-sufficient for themselves and whoever they are supporting. I was able to get an apartment and a car and give my family a stable home.



Armond Shaw, Biogen, Associate 3, BULLS Graduate 2022



What did you enjoy most and least about the program?

I like learning about information that will actually be used in the field, and that you can apply it to certain jobs and leverage your knowledge for your salary. Also, It was a hands-on program that gives you the basics at a rate you are able to learn. I can't say there's not much I didn't like about the program. My class was online and I loved that so if it was in person that might have taken away from the flexibility I was able to have with it being online.

What recommendation do you have for others considering this industry?

My advice is to pick a field where there is a lot of growth and know that you don't have to be in a lab to work in this sector. I was a temp, but worked hard and gained a full-time position.

Who would you recommend this program to and why?

The BioWork program can be a great recommendation for young adults who have an interest in the field of biotechnology and the life sciences. Here are a few reasons why I would suggest this program:

1. Career opportunities
2. Practical experience
3. Industry-relevant skills
4. Networking and mentorship
5. Advancements in biotechnology

To learn more about the BULLS program and apply for future cohorts, please follow this link: www.madeindurham.org/bulls-initiative

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES

DEVELOPING GREATNESS

Recently **Durham Success Summit's** (DSS) Founders hosted their Graduation and Pitch Day. This event celebrated and promoted the hard work of the Young Black Male participants (ages 16-24) in Durham. In 2022, DSS participated in the Innovate Durham Cohort where they partnered with City and County staff to grow their program. Their services include funding, educational resources, and professional networks to assist in the development of the Founders' respective startups. DSS's goal is to ensure all Founders are on a trajectory to leading multi-million-dollar enterprises with dozens of employees within 5-7 years. The program consists of 20 weekly group workshops that take place over the first 5 months of the program, with sessions led by Success Coaches, and experienced entrepreneurs.



DEREK RHODES,
FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DURHAM
SUCCESS SUMMIT [CLICK HERE!](#)

MEET OUR FOUNDERS



KOBIE
FOUNDER, BEST SPOTS

"This program will help me achieve my goals by giving me access to a great network of builders and the space/time to be able to build as well as connect with investors that want to see me succeed."



JEFFREY
FOUNDER, SKARCROW

"I want to share with the world my passion for individuality, inclusion, and community through creating experiences through the visual arts and the art within clothing."



TYLER
FOUNDER, STAYFAST

"I believe joining DSS will help prepare and cultivate my skills in entrepreneurship and personal development. This is an amazing opportunity for me to be a leader in my community, grow, and achieve."



TRECIAN
FOUNDER, CURATED
MARKETING STUDIO

"My goal is to better my entrepreneurial skills in hopes to relaunch my digital marketing business. I specialize in Content Production and Strategy. I want to learn how to find and maintain clientele."

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT: MAYA FREELON

Durham Small Business Opportunity Loan Fund

In Durham, Maya Freelon is making a big name for herself in the art world.

The award-winning visual artist has created unique sculptures and exhibits using a variety of media, and she's been recognized for her work by some of the leaders of the art world including Complex Magazine and the International Review of African American Art. She's been commissioned to create visual art for companies such as Google and Cadillac, and she's had art displayed in many galleries including the North Carolina Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Arts and Industries Building, and CAM Raleigh.

But in 2020, Freelon came to a major hurdle in the road, as the COVID-19 pandemic put a halt on her livelihood. For Freelon, the pandemic brought with it unsure times. "I take pride in sharing my artwork around the world," says Freelon. "I rely on art sales, commissions, exhibitions, and speaking engagements to make a living, and the pandemic brought that all to a stop. It was the first time in my career that I questioned whether I could continue being a full-time artist."

As Freelon navigated dealing with the pandemic as an artist, she was connected to Carolina Small Business Development Fund (CSBDF) through a community listserv. Working with the team at CSBDF, Freelon received grant capital from the Durham Small Business Recovery Fund, a grant program offered by Duke University and administered by CSBDF.

Two years later in 2022, Freelon returned to CSBDF and received her first small business loan through the Durham Small Business Opportunity Loan Fund, a partnership between CSBDF, the City of Durham, and Durham County that provides affordable capital to Durham-based small businesses that are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It was my first business loan, and CSBDF took the time to explain the process and how to create a strong application," says Freelon. "The entire process was easy to understand and streamlined. I was able to use the loan to hire assistants, pay for new equipment, and to continue to promote my artwork globally."

Photo captured by Jillian Clark and provided by Maya Freelon



The Durham Small Business Opportunity Loan Fund is offered to Durham-based business with fewer than 50 employees and less than \$5 million in annual revenues. The partnership has supported nearly 60 businesses and has dispersed over \$1.5 million in loans, with 74% of awards going to minority-owned firms and 52% to women-owned firms.

"The Durham Small Business Opportunity Loan Fund is a vital tool for Durham-based small business owners," said Reggie Jones, Director of Business Solutions at CSBDF. "This partnership between CSBDF, the City of Durham, and Durham County has helped many entrepreneurs in Durham navigate the effects of the pandemic while allowing them to continue growing and expanding their businesses."

For Freelon, the loan from CSBDF allowed her to continue doing what she loves to do while shining a light on the community that was there to support her. "It makes me proud to represent Durham, North Carolina wherever I go," says Freelon. "I'm happy to know I live in a community that has my back through good times and uncertainty just the same."

To learn more about Maya Freelon please visit www.mayafreelon.com

SMALL BUSINESSES SPOTLIGHT

Antonio Alanis Art LLC

Address: 600 Park Offices Dr. Ste 300. #13965 #108.
Durham, NC 27709

Website: antonioalanisart.com

Phone Number: (919) 236-8134

Tell us about your business:

Antonio Alanis Art LLC offers grant writing consulting services, helping nonprofit organizations secure funding to further their missions and positively impact their communities. Antonio Alanis Art LLC also works with clients to provide visual artwork and illustrations that align with clients' specific needs and requirements.

Hours of Operation:

Virtual: Monday to Thursday, 9 AM- 5 PM.

When did your business open?

December 2022

What type of products or services you offer?

Grant writing for nonprofits looking to expand funding opportunities and visual art for clients.

What makes your business unique/What's your specialty?

What makes Antonio Alanis Art LLC unique is our combination of expertise in grant writing consulting and our ability to provide visually captivating artwork and illustrations. We have a dual focus on supporting nonprofit organizations by helping them secure funding through our grant writing consulting services and offering a wide range of artistic solutions to meet our client's specific needs and requirements.

Antonio Alanís is an artist and educator living in Durham, North Carolina. His immigrant background, personal history, and education inspired him to explore themes such as social justice, identity, and immigration in North Carolina. He believes that the visual arts are an integral part of promoting cultural awareness about Hispanic/Latinx people in the United States.



SABRIA FUTRELL,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

To be included in the Small Business Spotlight, please email Sabria at sfutrell@dconc.gov

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT UPDATE

2023 has been a busy and exciting year for the Durham County business recruitment team, with three big job announcements:

- **Catalent**, a pharmaceutical company headquartered in New Jersey, who plans to invest approximately \$39 million dollars and hire 200 employees.
- **Eli Lilly**, a pharmaceutical company headquartered in Indiana, who plans to expand their current RTP campus by investing approximately \$450 million dollars and hiring 100 new employees.
- **Kempower**, an electric vehicle charging company headquartered in Finland, who plans to invest \$41 million dollars and hire several hundred employees.

As a component of the Durham County incentive and recruitment process, each company will also be entering into a community benefits agreement. Examples of benefits can include internships for local students, spending at minority vendors, programming and training support for Durham Public Schools teachers, sustainable building and operating practices, providing parental leave for employees, and more. As a result of these recruitment efforts, these three companies have collectively committed to \$43 million in new spending at minority and women owned businesses.

From left to right, Daniel Lee Von Dielingen (Eli Lilly), Andy Miracle (County), Matt Filter (County), Joe Owen (Eli Lilly)

