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By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

Have you ever wonder what The Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) really does?

Well GCP has been working hard in the business community for awhile now, but has not been that visible in the Black community.

Education about what they are doing is the key their progress.

One area is The Commission on Economic Inclusion which has accomplished a great deal over ten years. And, in addition to their current efforts, they all felt strongly that an additional set of complimentary strategies was timely.

The decision to make a leadership transition was related entirely to positioning them for the future, not in any way representing a repudiation of current accomplishment by anyone or any organization.

Asking the question, what happened with Andrew Jackson? They responded, 'it is GCP's policy not to publicly discuss personnel decisions of the organization.'

But they wanted Cleveland as well as the Black community to know they will continue to operate all facets of the organization, the survey, the MBA 2.5+, the federalMinorityBusinessCenter, Boardroom to Boardroom, etc.

They are also committed to working with a variety of community partners on expanding their role in driving inclusion in the construction arena, using some of the current recommendations from the Commission (Dick Pogue's report).

It was refreshing to know that they are excited to work with the mayor and county executive on inclusion work they have launched this year.

GCP's Joseph D. Roman**, p**resident and chief executive officer, was happy to have Brian Hall as an interim and their newly promoted deputy director Deborah Bridwell on board.

The thoughts was clear they are the right people, at the right time, to move the Commission forward and they will get all of the support necessary from Commission co-chairs and GCP.

GCP and the Commission truly appreciate Hall's passion for his interim role.

In addition to the construction area, they will need to double down on developing additional strategies that could accelerate the inclusion progress in senior staff and workplace diversity, supplier diversity, and the general survey trends they have been measuring for nearly a decade.

There may be additional metrics needed to explore that are even more useful today.

GCP is pleased with where they are today but not pleased that it is sufficient for the next five to ten years and are committed to seeing even more progress in the next few years.

The GCP/Commission will begin more regular updates and e-mail linkages with the Call and Post to ensure that they are more knowledgeable as a matter of course as to the Commission's progress.

The Commission is led by c**o-chairs Lyle Ganske,** partner-in-charge, midwest region; Jones Day; **Eddie Taylor,** president, and Taylor Oswald.

"I feel good in the direction the Commission is going," saidTaylor.

More than 100 volunteers from theNortheast Ohiobusiness community serve on the Commission's Advisory Board and its five committees. In addition to the Commission co-chairs, the Advisory Board is composed of committee chairs and at-large members.

Christopher Conner, CEO of Sherwin Williams, serves as the board chair for GCP. "I am happy about the accomplishments and direction we are going in. I certainly have faith in Brian and his leadership," Conner said.

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Their board is composed of CEOs of small, mid-sized and large companies in the Cleveland Plus region, as well as executives who lead major health care, educational, and venture capital organizations.

Per their report that came out Monday May 21, Employment in Northeast Ohio grew to more than 2 million workers in the first quarter of 2012, an increase of 9,000 jobs over Q1 2011, including 2,000 jobs gained in the construction industry.

According to the Cleveland Plus Economic Review report released by Team NEO , this is the seventh consecutive quarter of year-over-year growth in the region.

In addition, the report found that with an unemployment rate of 8.3 percent, Northeast Ohio

performed slightly better than the U.S.rate of 8.6 percent and on par with the state of Ohio. This represents a 1.4 percent decrease in the unemployment rate as compared with Q1 of 2011 when it was 9.7 percent.