



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce breaks new ground by establishing the first Black Advisory Business Council in Washington County**

The Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce has joined forces with local Black business owners to form the Black Advisory Business Council. The new council, the first of its kind in Hillsboro, is a culturally specific group working to inspire, empower, and promote the economic growth and sustainability of black businesses and professionals within Washington County. According to Ashley Howell, founder and owner of Arnell Recruiting Services, many Black business owners feel they are on an island by themselves in Washington County. This is why she contacted the Chamber.

“I reached out to the Hillsboro Chamber because I saw that the Black community is widely dispersed, vastly unsupported, and disconnected from the Black community in Portland” said Howell who moved to Hillsboro in 2017 from Texas. “Now it's time to shine a bright light on our existence in the county and start providing the right support and resources.”

The Hillsboro Chamber responded immediately to Howell’s observation and request for support, starting with the formation of the Black Advisory Business Council. “This is such an important time for our community, our State and our Nation,” said Deanna Palm, President of the Hillsboro Chamber. “The Hillsboro Chamber is privileged the Founders of the Black Advisory Business Council brought this opportunity to us. I am honored to be working alongside these extraordinary professionals” continued Palm.

Currently, the Council is made up of four business owners known as the “Founding Members.” They include Lozelle Mathai, CEO and founder of Closing Your Books LLC/Body of Accounting; Raina Evans, former Portland Rose Festival Queen and owner of Ready To Rent/R. Lee’s Aroma Rocks; Titonian Wallace owner of Nesace Media; and Howell.

“As a Council, we would like to amplify the efforts of Black businesses while addressing issues that are not only unique to business, but to Black professionals, our families, and the Black community in Washington County as well,” said Howell. “We also want the Council to be a safe haven for those experiencing systemic racism and acts of prejudice in business, on the job, in the community or any public place in Washington County.”

The Black Advisory Business Council is looking for all Black business owners, professionals, organizations, or families who are interested in becoming members or connecting as community. They also welcome any businesses, individuals or organizations that want to support or provide resources toward their efforts. Contact the Black Advisory Business Council at [blackadvisory@hillchamber.org](mailto:blackadvisory@hillchamber.org). Learn more <https://hillsborochamberor.com/black-advisory->

[business-council/](#) and follow the Black Advisory Business Council on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BlackAdvisoryBusinessCouncil/>.

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