

UP

URBAN PROFESSIONALS



Dorothy Twinney, Brian Townsend, Kristine Wise, Liza Kue and Liza Mondroe.

The national unemployment rate fell to 8.6% in December and one of the reasons for this decline is the strength of small businesses. In Michigan, the unemployment rate dropped to under 10% and while it's still too high, all indications are the economy is beginning to shake its doldrums. Small businesses are a major force behind job creation.

Detroit-based RBD Creative is one of those forces. RBD is a marketing communications and design company that specializes in identifying clients' key messages and then finding the best graphical approach for delivering messages

Small TALK



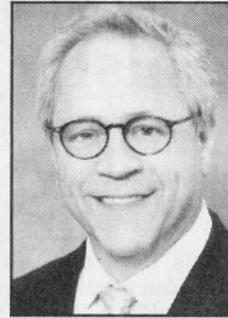
with Mark S. Lee

route because of the fire and a passion she had about starting and building a new company — particularly, in a region where jobs are sorely needed — focused on filling a business need while hiring people.

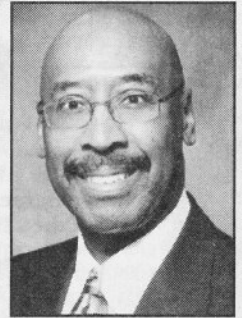
"I like the idea that I am creating jobs at a time when so many jobs are being eliminated or moved out of Southeast Michigan," she said.

When starting a business, entrepreneurs are not always sure which way to turn. According to Twinney, don't think you can do it all yourself. She suggests you leverage other people's expertise so you can focus

MOVING UP



Chair: Joel D. Applebaum, member, Clark Hill PLC.



Vice Chair: John A. Taylor, professor, Thomas M. Cooley Law School.



Treasurer: Anthony R. McCree, principal advisors L

Legal Aid and Defender directors elects new

The Board of Directors of Legal Aid and Defender Association, Inc. (LAD), Michigan's oldest and largest provider of free civil legal services to low-income people, has elected the following new officers for 2012:

- Chair: Joel D. Applebaum, member, Clark Hill PLC
 - Vice Chair: John A. Taylor, professor, Thomas M. Cooley Law School
 - Treasurer - Anthony R. McCree, principal, UHY Advisors LLP
 - Secretary: Dr. Patricia A. Wallace, psychologist, Wallace & Associates
- Other board members are:
- Lois E. Bingham, corporate counsel, Yazaki North America, Inc.
 - Karen Chadwick, professor, Thomas M. Cooley Law School
 - Arthur Dudley, II, shareholder, Butzel Long PC
 - Sherrie L. Farrell, member, Dykema Gossett, PLLC
 - Vance K. Jackson, Jr., vice president, JP Morgan Chase
 - Judge Terrance A. Keith, Wayne County Probate Court

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New chairman at De County Port Au

The Detroit Wayne County Port Authority has a new chairman and is looking to become a key source of job growth in the next decade.

Detroit businessman Louis James was elected chairman recently by the Board of Directors, replacing Art Blackwell who has a long history with the Port.



messages and then finding the best graphical approach for delivering messages.

with **Mark S. Lee**

you leverage other people's expertise so you can focus on your key strengths while managing your business.

well who has a long history with the Port.

Its client roster includes Genesis Genetics Institute, University of Michigan, Alliance Benefit Group of Michigan, Matt Prentice Restaurant Group, GEM Asset Management, Patriot Services, et al. Their clients are both B2C and B2B and represent the entire spectrum across the Detroit area.

RBD Created was started in 2009 by



Dorothy Twinney and Stan Dickson

Dorothy Twinney, president and co-owner, because of her belief that there was a void for a group of businesses in Southeast Michigan with respect to their marketing needs.

"They are not big Fortune 500 companies who can afford mega advertising budgets, but they are successful, diverse organizations that need a creative team to help tell their story and build their brands. That's where we come in," she said.

And while RBD Creative could have set up its business anywhere in the metropolitan area, it chose Detroit.

"I believe in Detroit. I think we have some of the most incredible people, history, architecture and resolve," she said. "It took so much strength and determination to build Detroit up the first time and I think if more of us base our businesses in Detroit, we will add to the strength and determination it will take to build Detroit again."

She exudes love and passion for Detroit and appreciates establishing her business downtown because in her words, "We love it here."

Twinney chose the entrepreneurial

In other words, surround yourself with good people and don't be afraid to ask for their assistance.

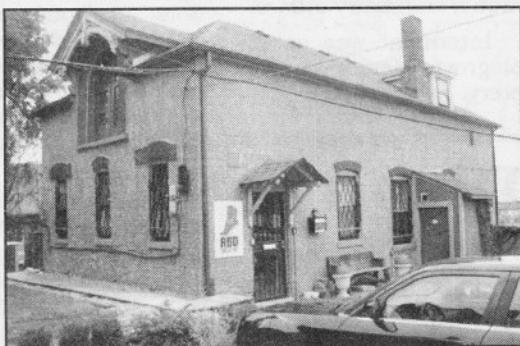
In these tough economic times, it's important to continue to invest in Detroit. She believes in not just opening a business in the city, but enjoying the sights and sounds by spending money at restaurants and shops. This will lead to a thriving core and city and will increase the revenue stream for business owners and will continue to make Detroit a viable city to live and shop.

While it's great news that major companies have moved downtown, there should be a mix of larger and smaller companies moving employees.

"We need smaller companies like RBD to be excited about finding ideal office space here," she said. "More individuals are being hired by small companies than any other sector right now. We need that here in Detroit."

In its two-year existence, RBD has continued to evolve its strategy. Their focus has shifted to personalization and helping clients tell their stories in a compelling way. This, when packaged effectively, provides them with a competitive advantage.

"I understand that our clients can't necessarily commit to all the marketing support they need. So we help them prioritize," Twinney said. "We also offer monthly payment plans so they know exactly what to expect each month. This has made a big difference for some of our clients, and frankly, it helps us as well."



The RBD Creative office.

With Twinney's vision and commitment, RBD is a beacon of hope in a region sorely looking for examples of how to do things the right way.

Mark S. Lee can be reached at www.leegroupinnovation.com or by e-mailing mark@leegroupinnovation.com. You can also follow him on Twitter, Linked In or Facebook.

"I am honored to have been chosen to serve as the chairman of an entity that is positioned to play a pivotal part in the resurgence of Detroit," said James. "As the new chairman I plan to facilitate the growth of business at our new dock and to continue reaching out to our port constituent businesses to provide help whenever necessary."

James served as vice chairman of the Port Authority for the past four years and on the board for the past eight years.

"We are excited to have Louis James as our new chairman," said John Jamian, the Port's executive director. "Louis is a prominent Detroit businessman who shares our vision of public service and business growth at Michigan's International Port of Detroit."

The Detroit Wayne County Port Authority has jurisdiction along the Detroit River and supports all of its port constituent companies with a myriad of government programs, grants and assistance.

James will lead the efforts to tell the Port Authority's message to the region about how important the organization is for Michigan-based businesses and as the region's emerging transportation authority.

"We think it is time to connect all of our multimodal components together to market our region," Jamian said. "We

UPSIDE

A new menu, fresh digs and

El Guapo, Detroit's first licensed mobile food truck in the city's history, has been quite busy over the holiday season. Owner Anthony Curis is excited for the many changes in the coming months, including upgrades to the menu, a new home base for operations, late-night hours and future concepts from the team.



Anthony Curis

"We are thrilled to announce our new partners, Dan and Lindsay Gearig. Dan and Lindsay have an extensive background in the mobile culinary field. Their creativity and passion for gourmet street food will take us to another level.

Dan Gearig, former owner of Chow Catering, has spent nearly the past decade building a successful mobile catering company that has serviced the film and commercial business in Michigan. He honed his food trucking

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