

EXPO SHOWCASES FIRMS - Columbus Dispatch, The (OH) - August 2, 1989 - page 08

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CENTRAL COLUMBUS - Being a co-owner of a minority-owned small business, John Lambert secured his spot at this year's **Ohio Black Expo** months ago.

"This is a great way for my business to get a lot of exposure and just to let people know that I exist," said Lambert, president and founder of Alpha Systems International, 1000 E. Main St., which installs electronic security systems in homes, cars and commercial buildings.

"The traffic of people was tremendous last year. We signed up thousands of interested people, and we're hoping to double the amount of signatures this year."

The benefit of establishing contacts with other businesses in Columbus, as well as with businesses from other states, has been another reason for Lambert to exhibit at the exposition.

"I always come back with a wealth of information that can help my business, just by talking to other business owners," he said.

The purpose of **Ohio Black Expo**, whose theme this year is, "Building Economic Independence," is simple, according to Rhonda D. Robinson, executive director and founder of **Ohio Black Expo, Inc.**

"We want to unite the masses of people together for the common good, to discuss the common concerns and issues that are germane to us," she said.

"Having an opportunity to network and coalesce with one another is vitally needed."

This year's **Expo**, the ninth annual event, will open with a Business Awards Reception at 6 p.m. Thursday at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for the Performing & Cultural Arts, featuring guest speaker Randall Robinson.

Robinson is the executive director of TransAfrica, a lobbying group for African and Caribbean nations.

Hours for the three-day exposition, to be held at Veterans Memorial, are 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday; and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday.

Admission to seminars is free with general admission, which is \$2 Friday and \$4 Saturday and Sunday.

An additional highlight is the Minority Business and Consumer Exhibition, which showcases minority-owned businesses.

Robinson attributes the increasing success of that phase to some of the 40 exhibitors from the Mount Vernon Plaza, Near East Side and the Driving Park areas that have been with the event since its inception and who remain today.

"They have stayed with us because it is important for us as a people to take care of business and support each other," she said.

Robinson said the **Ohio Black Expo** should be of interest to the entire family.

Highlights will include a series of business and community symposiums, a children's fashion show, a fashion show featuring a local modeling troupe called Fashion DeJure Models, and the first Miss **Ohio Black Expo** Pageant.

"The **Expo** is a celebration of a continuing commitment that not only represents a strong and surviving people, but a true celebration of our heritage and culture," Robinson said.

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Julie R. Bailey, Of The NeighborNews Staff, 'EXPO SHOWCASES FIRMS', *Columbus Dispatch, The* (online), 2 Aug 1989 08 <<https://infoweb-newsbank-com.webproxy3.columbuslibrary.org/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=news/11B86C3C56708990>>

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