Former Chicagoan doing well in beauty supply business

By Pam Widgeon
AFRO Staff Writer

"This is my dream come true and it is only the beginning. I hope I can encourage other black people who have knowledge that it is possible to go into business and it won't happen overnight."

Those were the words of 41 - year - old Ernest Young Jr., president of Freedom Distributors Inc., a wholesale outlet of beauty supplies and cosmetics and hair care items for professional, retail, and general merchandise, located at 5114 Liberty Heights Ave.

Young, who lived in Chicago for 18 years before moving to Baltimore in February, 1979, has always dreamed of having his own business.

He purchased his business from J. Walter Jackson, proprietor of J. Walter Jackson Beauty and Barber Supply, who is now employed for Young as his professional sales manager.

Young said he is dealing with black products such as Ultra Sheen, Posner's, Summit, Pro-line, Luster and several others that are made by black manufacturers.

He is now distributing products to Pantry Pride and Super Pride in the retail division.

"I only carry brand name products that are guaranteed by manufacturers and they must produce a liability insurance," said Young.

Young feels black people have not been getting the proper mixture of products that are available in the hair product line. According to Young, in 1976, black women spent $330 million on health and beauty aids including hair care items.

Young is known as a "diligent worker" who spends from eight to 13 hours a day at his place of business. Before opening in February 1979, Young spent numerous hours assisting in the remodelling of his store. A total of $20,000 has been spent and according to Young, "We have not finished yet."

In 1960 Young started working in a beauty and supply house in Chicago as a stock clerk "washing windows, cleaning bathrooms and delivering products," he said.

"I worked two jobs for 12 years in Chicago. I was a bus driver and later promoted to a traffic supervisor and worked at the beauty and supply house," says Young.

A graduate of Tennessee State University, Young also graduated from McCoy School of Barbering and Clairol Hair Coloring School. He is now having workshops for beauticians and barbers at Freedom Distributors and is the only distributor in Maryland that is offering free workshops.

Young stated, "I have found there is a great need for me. No one has really given the beauticians and barbers the attention they need to make sure they are up to date on what is new in the industry and give them the first class that they deserve."

Young is concerned about beauticians and barbers and is now supplying more than 300 beauticians and barbers in the city with supplies.

He claims he is working towards becoming the largest distributor for all beauticians.

Young stated, "I have found there is a great need for me. No one has really given the beauticians and barbers the attention they need to make sure they are up to date on what is new in the industry and give them the first class service that they deserve."

He claims he is working towards becoming the largest distributor of health and beauty aids and says, "I want people to know if Freedom Distributors carry and distribute a product, they can depend on it and know it is worth while."

Freedom Distributors is open to the public Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Young entrepreneur turns on 'Electric Eye'

Black owned banquet hall opens

There has long been a need in Baltimore for a black owned facility that provides full services for special affairs.

George E. Mitchell, who has been in the entertainment business for nearly nine years is the owner of the Electric Eye, 6307 Reisterstown Rd.

Mitchell says the Electric Eye has a seating capacity for 500 people. "We provide the metropolitan area with the best of two worlds, a first - rate banquet facility and a weekend disco."

However, Mitchell says the banquet facility is also available to other groups on the weekend.

At the Electric Eye, prices are reasonable and free parking is available.

Mitchell is a graduate of Morgan State University and Mergenthaler High School and was the first student member of the city School Board in 1971.

He was also voted by the Rotary Club of Baltimore for the Service Above Self Youth Award. He is a young man with a great deal of experience, imagination, energy and faith.

Mitchell says with the continued support of the people of "charm city" the Electric Eye can look forward to being another shining star in this "all America City."

For more information on the Electric Eye, call 764-1266 or just stop by to say hello.

NEW BANQUET HALL — Located in Northwest Baltimore, the Electric Eye, owned by young entrepreneur George Mitchell, will serve as a disco and banquet facility.

Va. Demos hire Williams

RICHMOND

Lyn R. Williams of Richmond has been named to coordinate the Democratic State Party's efforts in voter registration programs and minority relations, Chairman Richard J. Davis has announced.

Williams, a graduate of Bowie State College, has worked previously with the Congressional Black Caucus Subcommittee on Education in Washington and in the office of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm. More recently Williams has served as a consultant in Recreation and Parks, the Richmond Public School System and other areas.

Williams is also vice chairman for the campaigns for the eight Richmond Democratic incumbents to the General Assembly. He is a member of the Richmond Chapter of the NAACP and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

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Assurance: First Black Title Co.

Potential homeowners look for a good real estate agent — but just as important is a good title insurance company.

And that's where Assurance Title Co. comes in. Located in Baltimore at 3802 W. Rogers Ave., Assurance, a rapidly growing firm, is the only black - owned title insurance company in the state of Maryland, and one of the few in the nation.

Founded in the fall of 1977, by its president, Leon O. Belt, the company is capable of conducting property settlements and title searches anywhere in the state.

In the first year of operation, the company wrote more than $20 million worth of title insurance.

Why does a potential homeowner need a company such as Assurance?

"Anytime one purchases a piece of real property, it is important that a thorough examination of the land records pertaining to that particular piece of property be conducted," Belt said. "That's needed to determine that the purchaser is obtaining a title to the property, free of any liens, mortgages, or other encumberances that would call the purchaser's ownership into question."

And Assurance does more than just make sure the purchaser is acquiring a marketable title to the property.

The company also handles settlements — the final leg of a purchaser's journey to becoming a "real homeowner."

According to Belt, this final leg involves the actual transfer of title to the property from seller to the buyer — as well as the making of all necessary monetary adjustments between buyer and seller in order that costs such as property taxes, ground rents, and water bills be equitably shared by buyer and seller according to the date of settlement.

"Few property purchaers — save the professional investor — are familiar with the various terms and procedures involved in purchasing a piece of real estate," Belt said. "So Assurance strives to simplify and fully explain each term, procedure, and adjustments encountered by the purchaser." In line with attitude, Assurance offers to property purchasers — both first - time and professional — pre - settlement consultation and an explanation of each of the services in regards to the purchase.

Belt, 32, a licensed attorney, and licensed, but non-active real estate broker, said his company guarantees "prompt, professional services."

"We can meet any reasonable settlement deadline," he said, adding that Assurance will close a transaction within five business days from receipt of a buyer's request and contract copy.

As a settlement disbursement agent for most mortgage banking companies operating in the state of Maryland and many of metropolitan Baltimore's larger banking institutions and savings and loan associations, Assurance handles nearly $1 million a month in mortgage loan proceeds.

And just recently, Assurance received a commitment from the city of Baltimore to utilize the company to provide title insurance and settlement services for the city's real estate acquisitions and sales.

Belt adds that each Title insurance Policy issued by the company is backed by Security Title Guarantee Corp.

Assurance is staffed by three attorneys, a paralegal, and a legal secretary. The company also maintains contractual relations with experienced title examiners and land surveyors in each of Maryland's counties, as well as in Baltimore City.

Salon Me'Chelle offers total beauty care

Salon Me'Chelle is a black hair maintenance salon established over six years ago.

It is unique in that it is not a beauty salon, beauty shop or beauty parlor. Instead the hair is maintained through a unique hair care philosophy which can be practiced at home by the client.

The salon, located at 5416½ Park Heights Ave. is staffed with several triologists - cosmeticians, specializing in the structure and care of your hair.

Each client is given a free consultation on the first visit and consultations are done daily, Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Aside from those services provided at the beauty care facility, Salon Me'Chelle sponsors lectures and seminars at various public schools throughout the city.

Recently a dance recital was held at Greenspring Junior High and Darnella Richardson was awarded a scholarship by Salon Me'Chelle to continue her dance studies in New York under the direction of the Alvin Ailey Dance Troupe.

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The Arena Players: the economics of a community theater

Arena Players, Incorporated, one of the oldest black community theaters in the country is seldom regarded by the public as an economic enterprise.

Most feel that the mission of this and other community theaters is primarily to entertain and occasionally to instruct the public.

Despite any popular conceptions, the Arena Players definitely qualifies as a commercial venture from several viewpoints, according to Samuel H. Wilson, president and founder.

Arena Players first showed the purchasing power of the organization when the members and Board of Directors headed by chairman Camilla Sherrard, succeeded in buying property in the late 1960s as a permanent home.

The abandoned and unused structure in the 400 block Orchard Street was put into service as a dynamic theater for the community called the Arena Playhouse.

Voluntary contributions from the board and members, enabled the purchase of the three - storied building for $10,000.

The initiative and perseverance of the group to expand in the community over the years was finally recognized and in 1975 several grants were provided by the city, state and the National Endowment for the Arts to make extensive renovations to the building.

Some $321,000 was allocated to renovate the first floor auditorium and build a lobby, backstage area and office space.

During the one - year period of construction, Arena Players continued to perform by renting space at the Community College of Baltimore in Turner Auditorium.

In its ever increasing efforts to expand and become a multi - cultural arts center, Arena Players sought the help of elected officials and was awarded a grant which the state approved during the 1979 General Assembly.

The $250,000 grant will only be realized if the group can match that amount. Baltimore City has promised to give $100,000 of that amount which leaves $150,000 that must be met.

These funds will be used to renovate the Playhouse's second and third floors for use as studios, offices, classrooms, costume storage and set design facilities as well as a smaller auditorium for rehearsals.

Various fundraising activities have been planned by Arena Players in hopes of raising the remaining amount which must be obtained before June 1982 or all funds are reverted.

Through the ticket sales profit sharing plan, Arena Players is able to return money to the community. Organizations that agree to sponsor a performance and sell a specified number of tickets, receives one - third of their total sales.

This plan which has served as the backbone of the organization, assures Arena Players of a steady, full audience and allows the sponsoring organizations an opportunity to add substantial sums to their treasuries.

Arena Players through the treasury garnered from ticket sales, grants and contributions from the public has been able to operate a successful program of training in theatre arts for inner city youth from 14 to 20 years of age.

The budget for this operation includes the purchase of teaching materials, payment of staff salaries, cost of building maintenance and utilities.

Currently this program, called the Youththeater is conducted during the summer. However, once the second and third floors have been renovated into classroom facilities, the training school will operate year - round.

During its entire existence, a period of 27 years, the theater operation has required the use of the services of other merchants and firms in the community to continue its program.

The oil - heated, air - conditioned building must be cleaned, secured and maintained by workers whose salaries are paid by the organization.

Books, records, tapes, lights, paint, lumber, furniture, props, programs and brochures are all items which are included as necessities in the operational budget of the community theater.

The Arena Players thus fulfills its mission as a cultural center and at the same time puts money back into the community.

AFRO Photo by Mark Gail

THEATRE DEVELOPMENT — The Arena Playhouse, home of Arena Players, Inc., has undergone many changes during its 27 - year existence. This new entrance at 801 McCulloh St. added in 1976 when the theater underwent extensive renovations. The old entrance was 406 Orchard Street.

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Washington Federal Savings and Loan Association sponsors seminars

Washington Federal Savings and Loan Association is in the midst of one of its most ambitious community service endeavors, currently sponsoring seminars for senior citizens, programs on small business in the inner city, and most recently an educational effort directed to youngsters in explaining the values of savings.

One of the city's top real estate lenders with heavy commitments to minority borrowers and to housing for low - moderate income families, Washington Federal is deeply involved in community programs aimed at upgrading neighborhoods in the inner city.

After granting loans for a Hardee's Restaurant, it conducted a program for students of four area schools to explain what is involved in starting one's own business. It is currently involved in a program to erect a professional building with a variety of medical services in Northeast Washington.

Washington Federal recently established its Seniors' Association for Money Management (SAMM), which offers sound financial advice at seminars with subjects ranging from buying healthful foods to safety mesures for home security.

It distributes a monthly newsletter entitled, "Senior Tips," and encourages the use of direct deposit of Social Security and retirement checks to avoid loss or theft.

Homer the Lion, Wasington Federal's new mascot, is currenty speaking before children's groups and appearing on children's television progams to stress the fun and educational experiences of saving.

Homer's Club features special passbooks, T-shirts, and membership certificates to encourage savings . . . similar to the past school programs promoting Savings Stamps and U.S. Savings Bonds.

Homer stresses that a savings and loan association is like a "money store," providing interst to those placing money in a savings acount. . . . and then providing that money to those who need to borrow to build a building or a business.

Founded in 1881, Washington Federal is currently one of the city's leading lenders of mortgage money, with substantial commitments east of Rock Creek Park and in areas of low to moderate incomes in Washington, Virginia and Maryland.

In addition to its headquarters at 5101 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., it has seven branch offices strategically located throughout the District.

Plans for additional branch offices are under way.

Bonds hit $3,206 million

May Series E-H Savings Bonds sales figures released by the Department of the Treasury credited the Metro D.C. Area with $10.6 million bringing the year to date sales to $49.9 million, according to Sheldon W. Fantle, volunteer chairman for the Metro D.C. Area.

Nationally, Series E and H bond sales for the five - month period, January - May amounted to $3,206 million. Exchanges of Series E bonds for Series H bonds totalled $163 million, an increase of 15 percent over the $142 million exchanged during January - May 1978.

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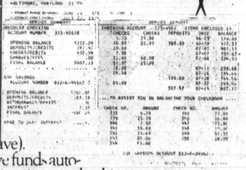

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