



Cathy Diane Adams
President and CEO

Cathy D. Adams has been a part of the tapestry of the Oakland business community since January 1983. She came to Oakland as an intern from Jackson State University where she majored in Mass Communications. An effective communicator and a natural influencer, upon completion of her internship, she was offered a full time and permanent job with The Northern California Black Chamber of Commerce.

After a period of dormancy, the Chamber re-emerged in 2003 as the Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce (OAACC). In July 2019, they brought Cathy in as President and CEO. Her assignment, of course, was to advocate for African American owned businesses. Little did anyone know, months later, we would all face the wrath of COVID-19. She acknowledges, "Even before COVID-19, African American owned businesses were swimming upstream against a current of inequities and insufficiencies as they desperately tried to offer the same products and level of services as their counterparts."

Nonetheless, with Cathy as President and CEO, the OAACC pushed forward with a goal to thrive, in spite of, the debilitating economic and health crisis. They swung into action by introducing the OAACC Resiliency Relief Program. They reached out to individuals, businesses and corporations they knew to be supporters and who they knew would commit to the solvency and survival of local African American businesses, raising over \$1 Million Dollars. It is because of this effort; 230 African American owned businesses have received a grant.

In addition to serving as President of OAACC, Cathy is also President of CDA Consulting Group. For twenty-five years, CDA, an event planning company, has produced outstanding events in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Cathy continues her work with organizations which strive to make a difference in the lives of women in her community. She is the Charter President of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., and Oakland Bay Chapter serving the Bay Area since 1995. She has produced 22 successful Madam C.J. Walker Business Community and Recognition Awards Luncheons. The Oakland Bay Area Chapter of 100 Black Women, celebrated its 25th Anniversary, November 5th of this year.

Cathy is also the visionary and founder of The Powerful Women of the Bay Awards. The first event was held March 2009 in recognition of Women's History Month. Eleven years later, the event continues to celebrate the accomplishments of a diverse group of women throughout the Bay Area. Partial proceeds from the event benefit the BWOPA TILE Leadership program for young women.

Cathy has received national and local recognition for her work. She is also the recipient of many awards and honors. Just to name a few:

- The U.S. Black Chamber, Inc. (USBC) recognized OAACC as the USBC Chamber of the of the Year for 2020.
- The Jefferson Award for Channel 5
- In The Spirit Award
- Multi-Ethnic Sports Hall of Fame Women and Service Award
- Special Recognition Award for Community Service, presented by the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, Inc, 32nd Annual Gala 2020
- Charles Houston Bar Association Community Service Award
- BWOPA Ella Hill Hutch Award from the Oakland Berkeley Chapter
- Unsung Hero Award to be presented in February of 2024 by Assembly member Mia Bonta
- Madam C.J. Walker Entrepreneur Award 2022
- Former recipient of the ICON Among us Award presented by the Black Joy Parade

Cathy has also held the following positions:

- Founding member of the Museum of the African Diaspora.
- A former Commissioner for the Alameda County Commission on the Status of Women.
- A Member of the Greeters committee and President of Missionary Society, Beebe Memorial Cathedral Church in Oakland California.
- Founding President of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women Oakland Bay Area Chapter serving the Bay Area since 1995
- Founder of Powerful Women of the Bay, serving the Bay Area for 15 years in celebration of Women's History Month

Community is the common link in all of Cathy's activities. Her community is at the forefront of all that she has done over the years and all that she continues to do. Which goes along with what her mother told her when she was a little girl, "As you are moving up, take someone with you".