



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy A. Cooney

Senator Jeremy Cooney Presents Black Owned Businesses, Bobo's Chicken Shack and Panther Graphics with NYS Senate Empire Awards

JEREMY A. COONEY August 11, 2021

| ISSUE: **NYS SENATE EMPIRE AWARD**

(Brighton, NY) - Today, **Senator Jeremy Cooney** (D-Rochester) honored **Devon “Bobo” Crittenden**, owner of Bobo’s Chicken Shack, and **Tony Jackson**, President of Panther Graphics Inc., with the New York State Senate’s Empire Award. Both Bobo’s Chicken Shack and Panther Graphics are local Black-owned businesses that center giving back to the community in their business models. The awards were presented in accordance with National Black Business Month.

Bobo’s Chicken Shack is considered one of Rochester’s best restaurants for soul food. During the pandemic there was a nationwide chicken wing shortage, and when other restaurants raised prices, Bobo decided to take the loss himself to keep his soul food affordable for the community he serves. In June Bobo held a give-back for the community. He gave out free dinners from open until closing and awarded two Rochester High school Seniors \$500 scholarships.. On the day of the giveback, Bobo’s stove broke and began to leak gas, yet he continued to serve the community despite the obstacle.

Panther Graphics provides graphic design and printing services to organizations including Wegmans, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Cornell University. Panther Graphics pride

themselves on having a community first focus. Operation “Protect your Circle” partnered with Canfield & Tack and Diversipak, to support the City of Rochester, NY - Mayor's Office with mailing protective masks and 2020 Census information to nearly 96,000 residents at the height of the pandemic. Tony is also dedicated to helping youth achieve their dreams. A graduate of Edison, Tony partners with the school to provide a print shop program, which provides students with invaluable hands-on training and work-force development to jump start their careers in the printing world after high school.

The New York State Senate Empire Award recognizes excellence in business throughout the state.

Senator Jeremy Cooney (on Devon “Bobo” Crittenden)

“Devon “Bobo” Crittenden consistently prioritizes the needs of the community, and is undeterred by obstacles. He undertook personal financial loss in order to maintain affordable prices through the pandemic’s national chicken shortages, and committed to a full day of fundraising for local high school students despite a broken stove. Bobo’s Chicken Shack embodies excellence in business, and it is an honor to present Mr. Crittenden with the New York State Senate Empire Award during National Black Business Month.”

Devon “Bobo” Crittenden

“I want to tell all my black people to stay inspired and never give up no matter what obstacles you may face. I love serving my community and will continue to make a positive impact in the city that molded me into the man I am today. Special thanks to Senator Cooney for honoring me during National Black Business Month with the Empire Award.”

Senator Jeremy Cooney (on Tony Jackson)

“Tony Jackson, has led Panther Graphics to excel in creativity, quality, and community outreach. His commitment to the community is evident in his collaboration with the Mayor’s

office in 2020 to mail protective masks and Census information to nearly 96,000 residents at the height of the pandemic. Tony's legacy in the community prevails in the Edison High School Print Shop Program, which provides students with invaluable hands-on training and work-force development to jump start their careers in the printing world after high school."

Tony Jackson

"Black excellence is a mindset that goes beyond just having financial or social success. It's about standing on the shoulders of our ancestors who have come before us and pouring our talents and resources into our communities to progress them forward. The partnership between Panther Graphics and Edison Tech is something I hold dear to my heart. When I look at those students, I am looking at myself. I was once in their shoes, and I understand the importance of having someone pouring into you and pushing you to be the best version of yourself. I want to thank Senator Cooney for this recognition and will continue to work to create a better community."