



CRAIN'S

NEW YORK BUSINESS

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FIXER-UPPERS
Firm remodels dingy units as short-term rentals PAGE 3



HEALTH CARE

OUT FOR BLOOD

Not-for-profit facilities find big business in selling donated blood to hospitals

BY MAYA KAUFMAN

The advertisements beckon: “Just one pint of your healthy blood can save up to three lives.” “An hour of your time can mean a lifetime for someone else.” “If you’re looking for a sign, this is it! There’s a CRITICAL NEED.”

The pleas present blood shortages as a constant crisis, made even worse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Blood and its derivatives—namely red blood cells, platelets and plasma—indeed are essential to modern medicine and routinely in short supply. And hospital consolidations and cost-cutting measures have largely left the jobs of collecting, processing and distributing the precious resource to not-for-profit blood centers.

In an oft-overlooked and little-known industry, blood centers have become major businesses that depend on a steady stream of product—collected from altruistic donors—that is later sold to hospitals for hundreds of dollars per unit.

One player in particular stands out for the way it has turned blood into big

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NEW YORK BLOOD CENTER



A NEW YORK BLOOD CENTER employee prepares donated blood to have its white blood cells removed.

POLITICS

Mayor-elect Adams hints at agenda

Promises new approach to law enforcement, more optimistic city

BY BRIAN PASCUS

Eric Adams, newly elected as the city’s second Black mayor, told *Crain’s* he plans a return to community-centered policing and to squeeze waste from school budgets.

Adams rose from poverty to police captain to the seat of power last Tuesday; he handily defeated Republican opponent Curtis Sliwa, according to unofficial returns from the city’s Board of Elections.

The mayor-elect said his story should inspire “the dishwasher who hears there’s no future for him” and hinted at an agenda that includes:

- Broadening police promotion criteria to include recommendations from residents and

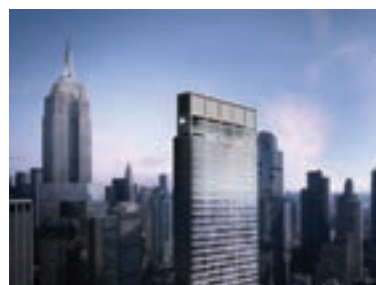
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WHO OWNS THE BLOCK

Ritz-Carlton buys into high-end home-sharing model

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CHERYL MCKISSACK DANIEL McKissack & McKissack

INTERVIEW BY NATALIE SACHMECHI

A group of developers is determined to make history by becoming the first majority-Black team ever to build a skyscraper in the city. Cheryl McKissack Daniel, the fifth-generation owner of construction firm McKissack & McKissack, is part of that consortium, along with developer Don Peebles, architect David Adjaye and Exact Capital Group. The team responded to a request for proposals from the city with its plans for the Affirmation Tower, to be located on a site next to the Javits Center. If successful, the building will have massive implications for diversity in New York City. As head of a minority- and women-owned business enterprise, McKissack Daniel sheds light on the downsides of bearing the MWBE designation—but why such programs are still necessary.

Why has it taken so long for a team like this to come together in New York City?

Just telling someone that Don Peebles and two other Black developers including a woman are looking to build one of the tallest buildings in Manhattan is just a buzz because it's never happened before. I think timing is everything, and right now the timing is perfect after all that has happened with respect to Covid-19 shedding

DOSSIER

WHO SHE IS President and CEO, McKissack & McKissack

BORN Nashville

RESIDES Armonk, Westchester County

EDUCATION Bachelor's and master's in civil engineering, Howard University

TEE TIME When she isn't working, McKissack Daniel enjoys golfing and the occasional cigar.

BIG DREAMS McKissack Daniel's aspirations extend beyond her work at her family's company. She wants to win the Nobel Peace Prize as an engineer.

HISTORY LESSON McKissack & McKissack is the oldest minority-owned construction firm in the country. It was started in 1905 by the grandsons of a slave, who learned the construction trade from his owner. His grandsons earned the first architectural licenses by African Americans in Tennessee in 1922.

light on the inequalities of people of color. And if New York doesn't do it, then when is it going to happen?

You're a Black woman running a construction firm. What obstacles do you face?

One obstacle that we deal with constantly is that we're just not considered contractors or developers—we're considered MWBEs. We are like a subcategory that brings on its own connotations



that people don't talk about. A lot of times we're considered to be inferior, that we don't have the capital, that we don't have the expertise, that we're going to cost more—which always drives me nuts. I look forward to that day where I don't get that comment of “We're so glad to have McKissack & McKissack on our team because it's owned by a Black woman or it's an MWBE.”

Are the city's MWBE programs helpful? Or do they put firms like yours in a bubble?

The programs absolutely are needed. It's imperative to have MWBE programs or there would not be any MWBE business ever. People in general continue with the status quo. They work with the people they know unless they want to be innovative. When we look at developments like Hudson Yards or any high-rise around Midtown, there is minimal MWBE involvement. So the private sector is just now getting involved.

What happens if your team doesn't win the bid for this project?

It would be terrible for New York City. I'm sure other opportunities will present themselves, but this is the best time for this to happen. If it doesn't happen, it has gotten so much attention that I have gotten inquiries from other cities about it. Do we really want other cities to do this before New York? No, we don't, but there are other cities that will do it that have the funding and the capital. We're not asking for a bunch of subsidies—this is straight out of our pockets. This is not just a development. This is a huge statement for New York City. ■

BUCK ENNIS

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