

# A Letter from the Founder: Building Legacy Through Perseverance

Dear Valued Investors and Partners,

On July 26, 2021, I embarked on a journey that would transform not only my life but the legacy of my family for generations to come. STEPHENSON CORP, LLC was born from a vision of possibility—a chance to create something meaningful and financially impactful for my family. When my brother Steve, an experienced truck driver, shared the potential earnings in the hauling industry, I recognized an opportunity that aligned with my determination to build generational wealth.

Today, our company operates two dump trucks specializing in hauling sand, dirt, gravel, asphalt, debris, and scrap metal for construction and development projects throughout Cincinnati. While our services are straightforward, our mission is profound: to establish a sustainable, thriving Black woman-owned business in an industry where representation like mine is rare.

Being a Black woman in this field has shown me that we have to work 10x more than others. But I have to ask myself—if not me, then who?

I won't sugarcoat the challenges. Securing contracts has been our greatest hurdle, often requiring us to work exponentially harder to prove our competence and reliability. I've experienced equipment being scrutinized more closely than our competitors' and faced subtle barriers that only reinforce my commitment to excellence.

The support of organizations like MBAC (Minority Business Assistance Center) has been invaluable. Through their guidance, I've gained access to certification processes, networking opportunities, and a community of fellow minority business owners who understand my journey. Working with outreach coordinators like Vivian Watkins has helped transform STEPHENSON CORP from simply a business idea into a structured enterprise with a clear path forward.

Looking ahead, I envision STEPHENSON CORP growing into a six-figure operation within the next few years. My strategic plan includes expanding our fleet, creating quality employment opportunities, and securing major contracts—including work on the Brent Spence Bridge project. Each milestone we reach represents not just business success, but a step toward reshaping industry expectations about minority-owned businesses.

To those considering an investment partnership with STEPHENSON CORP, I offer not just a business opportunity, but a chance to participate in a movement. Your support would help us overcome the capital barriers that often limit minority business growth while positioning you within a promising sector of the construction industry.

To fellow entrepreneurs just beginning their journey: NEVER GIVE UP. The celebration of success will ultimately outweigh the obstacles you face. Believe in yourself even when you feel out of place. Your purpose is valid, your presence is necessary, and your persistence will pave the way.

With determination and gratitude,

Shante Stephenson