

## Finding Business Success Right at Home



Rayshawn Douglas practically bubbles over with excitement when talking about his successful year-old business, Douglas Janitorial Services. After three brain surgeries to correct disabling symptoms of epilepsy, Rayshawn felt that “God took this disability away” to allow him to flourish and show others a path to success.

As a resident of Ida Yarbrough, Rayshawn was determined to get a subcontract with AOW Associates on the redevelopment taking place in his backyard. So, in September of 2018, he got his D.B.A. and followed by going to the WAGE Center to find out how to get other certifications that would help a new business qualify for opportunities. He became a Section 3 registered business and obtained his Albany City Minority Business Enterprise certification, which he hopes to follow with New York State Certification in the near future.

Rayshawn says, “until you present yourself and show people,” opportunity doesn’t just show itself. He’s worked hard at networking and learning, saying, “I’m serious about life.” He talks about five principles he does business by: “rules, regulations, policies, procedures and laws.” He takes customer satisfaction seriously, as demonstrated by AOW Senior Project Manager, Peter Oliver’s comments: “AOW could not be happier to be working with Rayshawn Douglas. From day one, Rayshawn has performed at an extremely high level, shows up on time and has completed his work within difficult time constraints. He always goes above and beyond to ensure his work is exemplary. I look forward to a continued relationship with Rayshawn.”

Rayshawn talks about the future saying, “my next goal is to open the doors with Albany Housing Authority and get a few more projects.” As an employer, he takes seriously his responsibility “to hire more minorities.” Working on a wage rate project means he pays his employees a substantial wage on this particular job. So, when he hands a paycheck to an employee, he says, “one of the things that inspires me, is to see a check with Douglas Janitorial Services” written as the employer. Rayshawn believes that, “God is showing the creativity of some regardless of race or color” and hopes that others will be inspired by what is possible, rather than focusing on limitations.