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# From the pages of @AfricatownSea: In the Midst of Global Upheaval, A Black Business Renaissance

Posted by [Africatown](#) | 16 - Aug - 2021

In September of 2020, nine months into life with the pandemic that changed the world, online business platform, Yelp, reported that 60% of the businesses listed on its site had officially closed.

The Federal Reserve Bank released its own study, finding that the number of active Black-owned, small businesses dropped by 41%, almost twice the rate of non-Black-owned establishments.

Yet, many **Africatown** businesses seem to be defying the trends and turning a story of uncertainty into entrepreneurial possibility. And, as the 2021 Memorial Day event, **Honoring Our Black Wall Streets**, proved, the greater community is ready to patronize and support them.

[Liberty Bank Building](#)s anchor commercial tenant, **Chef Kristi Brown**, opened [Communion R&B](#) with her son, **Damon Bomar**, in December 2020. Born in the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic, their business was recently named one of the by luxury magazine, **Conde Nast Traveler**.

In a recent national interview with CBS, Chef Kristi commented, right now, its a great time to open up a business, even! I think, with the PPP loan and theres so many grants out there, if its something that youve been doing and youve been honing your skills, then theres no better time to jump in!

In his own interview with CNN Business, Bomar gave another reason for the timing of the opening, the biggest thing for us is were filling a need and not just for food in this area. Our goal and our vision was to create a sense of intimacy in Seattle for our community.

While Chef Kristi makes reference to federal resources for new businesses, [King County Equity Now](#) and partner organizations are demanding that **Seattle City Council** and **King County Council** invest

\$300 million of American Relief Plan funds directly into the Black Community, noting that less than 2% of **Paycheck Protection Program** loans were made to Black-owned businesses.

Meanwhile some Seattle entrepreneurs are seeking crowd funding to get started or even stay afloat. Established over 20 years ago, aka **Jackson Street General Store** on 28th has reached out the community looking for financial support to keep

its doors open. New businesses like [Melo Cafe](#) (taking over the former **Cortona Cafe** location) and [23rd Avenue Brewery](#) have been seeking out contributions and actively building a social media support base before opening their doors.

Others have gone full steam ahead, including [Shikorina Pastries](#), [Noire Pack](#), [Debonair Decor](#), [Nurture Well Center](#), , [Essential Juice Co](#),

**Monika Mathews**, Founder and CEO of [QueenCare](#), opened a second store in February, a flagship location on 23rd and Jackson.

With community staples like [Catfish Corner](#) and [Simply Soulful](#) moving to the Jackson Apartments, [Earls Cuts & Styles](#) to the Liberty Bank Building and into a beautiful building on MLK and Union, just around the corner from [The Postman Seattle](#), legacy businesses are getting a fresh start in modern spaces while staying within the community.

Africatown has even more to look forward to this year with [Cafe Avole](#) joining the Liberty Bank Building and the new location of opening soon on MLK.

***For the latest in Seattle Black business news follow #BlackBizAlerts on @AfricatownSea [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages, featuring a different Black-owned business everyday in 2021.***