



SOUTHWEST DETROIT

B U S I N E S S A S S O C I A T I O N

Executive Director

Organization: Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA)

Reports To: SDBA Board of Directors

Location: Southwest Detroit, Michigan

FLSA Status: Full-Time, Exempt

About Us, Mission, and Values

The Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA) believes that embracing the unique backgrounds, perspectives, and talents of every individual is vital to achieving our mission of supporting and growing a rich, vibrant business ecosystem in Southwest Detroit.

We strive to create a welcoming and supportive environment that celebrates the diverse voices and experiences within our community. This includes business owners, entrepreneurs, employees, and all stakeholders connected and committed to the growth and vitality of the Southwest Detroit community. We recognize that by cultivating an inclusive space, we can inspire innovation, collaboration, and the shared prosperity of all our members.

SDBA's commitment to equity means actively addressing and dismantling barriers that prevent businesses, programs and individuals in Southwest Detroit from fully participating in and benefiting from the opportunities available. We are dedicated to providing access to resources, networking opportunities, mentorship, and educational programs that empower businesses, programs and individuals within Southwest Detroit to thrive.

Our Mission

Established in 1957, the Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA) fosters innovation, drive, and commitment. We work with investors, entrepreneurs, customers, and neighbors to capitalize on Southwest Detroit's competitive advantage. We support our community's vision for a healthy, vibrant neighborhood.

The Association is a coalition of businesses and community interests committed to facilitating the continuation and enhancement of a stable, economically healthy Southwest Detroit. We accomplish this by employing strategies that support existing business and industrial enterprises, enhance the climate for public and private investment and economic growth, and act as a vehicle for cooperative ventures that support economic development in Southwest Detroit.

Our Vision

We support our community's vision for a healthy, vibrant neighborhood. The Association is a coalition of businesses and community interests committed to facilitating the continuation and enhancement of a stable, economically healthy Southwest Detroit.

Position Summary

The Executive Director serves as the chief executive officer and strategic leader of the Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA). This individual is responsible for advancing the organization's mission to strengthen and support the diverse business community, promote economic growth, and celebrate the area's vibrant arts and cultural heritage. The Executive Director oversees operations, finances, programs, partnerships, and advocacy initiatives that make Southwest Detroit a thriving hub for business, creativity, and community connection.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership & Strategic Vision

- Lead the development and execution of a strategic plan that fosters inclusive economic growth and community vitality in Southwest Detroit.
- Serve as a visible and accessible leader, engaging with business owners, artists, residents, and community partners to promote collaboration and shared prosperity.
- Represent the association in civic, governmental, and public forums to advance advocacy efforts on behalf of local businesses.

Business & Economic Development

- Support small business growth, entrepreneurship, and retention through technical assistance, workshops, and partnerships with financial and development institutions.
- Champion equitable economic development and ensure resources are accessible to minority-, women-, and immigrant-owned businesses.
- Collaborate with city, state, and private partners to attract and sustain investment in Southwest Detroit's commercial corridors.

Arts, Culture & Placemaking

- Promote arts, cultural programming, and public spaces as key economic drivers and identity anchors for the community.
- Partner with local artists, cultural institutions, and developers to create vibrant, inclusive spaces and events that reflect Southwest Detroit's heritage.
- Foster cross-sector initiatives connecting culture, commerce, and community well-being.

Community Engagement & Partnerships

- Build and maintain strong relationships with community organizations, neighborhood groups, schools, and residents.
- Facilitate programs that align the interests of local businesses and community needs, ensuring equitable participation and benefit.
- Act as a bridge-builder across diverse cultural and linguistic communities within Southwest Detroit.

Financial Management & Fundraising

- Develop and manage annual budgets, ensuring financial sustainability and transparency.
- Secure diversified funding through grants, sponsorships, memberships, and partnerships.
- Report to the Board on financial health, strategic priorities, and impact metrics.

Organizational Management & Development

- Lead, mentor, and develop a small but high-performing staff and volunteer team.
- Maintain effective communication and accountability with the Board of Directors.
- Ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, and reporting requirements.

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in Business, Nonprofit Management, Urban Planning, Public Administration, or related field (Master's preferred).
- Minimum of 5 years of experience in nonprofit, economic development, or community leadership roles.
- Demonstrated success in building partnerships, fundraising, and managing budgets.
- Experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Knowledge of small business development, community revitalization, and/or creative economy initiatives.
- Strong interpersonal, communication, and advocacy skills.
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) strongly preferred.

Personal Attributes

- Passionate advocate for Southwest Detroit's people, businesses, and culture.
- Collaborative leader with cultural humility and a community-first mindset.
- Strategic thinker with entrepreneurial spirit and problem-solving skills.
- Skilled relationship-builder who inspires trust and partnership.

Compensation & Benefits

- Competitive salary commensurate with experience.
- Health, dental, and retirement benefits.
- Professional development opportunities.
- Flexible schedule with community-based work.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter, résumé, and three professional references to blaire.miller@huntergroup.com with the subject line "Executive Director – Southwest Detroit Business Association." Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.