

A COMMEMORATIVE TRIBUTE



February 19, 2021

40 Years Dedicated To Developing Workers and Strengthening Communities

OUR FOUNDER



KRA Corporation (KRA) is a Black-owned business enterprise with extensive domestic and international workforce-development experience.

Knowlton R. Atterbeary founded the firm, and continues to serve as the President & CEO, focusing his attention and energy on strategic planning and development to ensure KRA's sustained expansion and growth in the future.

Mr. Atterbeary graduated Michigan State University (MSU) with a BS degree in Systems Science and Economics, and an MBA in Management and Finance.

As a graduate student, Mr. Atterbeary served as Director, MSU Computer Institute for Social Science Research, publishing a textbook and implementing programs that introduced disconnected youth to computers, the college experience, and career exploration.

In 1970, he launched a successful consulting practice in conjunction with the Black Economic Union of Greater Kansas City, which focused on economic development for minority- and small-disadvantaged businesses in Greater Kansas City, MO.

Concurrently, Mr. Atterbeary served as a Management Instructor for the Business Institute Training Center, University of Missouri. In 1981, he founded KRA with a belief that sustainable community economic independence is linked inextricably to a skilled workforce, which became his life's mission.

Mr. Atterbeary and KRA have received numerous awards including:

- One of America's Fastest-Growing Privately Held Companies in the United States (4 consecutive years) - *Inc.* magazine
- Clifton R. Wharton Jr. Distinguished Alumni Award –Michigan State University Alumni Association
- Job Corps' Small Business Company of the Year
- Contractor of the Year (Several Federal Government Agencies)
- Peter Kaiser Lifetime Achievement Award –NAWDP
- The HistoryMakers, BusinessMaker

Additionally he has contributed significantly to support the missions of numerous domestic and foreign organizations, including: Corporate Council on Africa; National Board of Directors, National Black MBA Association; National Coalition of Minority Businesses, Officer; Sigma Pi Phi, Beta Mu Boule; Omega Psi Phi, Tau Pi Chapter; Small Business Committee, National Job Corps Association; Small Business Task Force/South Africa Working Group; U.S. Conference of Mayors, Workforce Development Council; and Howard County [MD] Small Business Commission.

OUR BEGINNING: 1981 – 2000

Mr. Atterbeary was convinced that the key to unlocking the door to sustainable economic development was effective workforce development at the local level. Thus, the overarching objective of KRA's business strategy was to develop an enterprise whose ultimate goal was to operate community-based workforce service programs that would "develop workers and strengthen communities".

KRA's first contract, which provided counseling, information, and referral services to military families, was a multi-year relationship with the U.S. Naval Academy's Family Support Center in Annapolis, Maryland (MD) and expanded to include Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County, MD.

For its second long-term engagement, a contract with the Department of the Interior (DOI), KRA provided a comprehensive range of administrative, management, and professional support services to all DOI Bureaus and Offices.

After 10 years of operation, Mr. Atterbeary joined the SBA's 8(a) Program. As a firm with an already established history of excellent contracting, KRA graduated the Program in 2000, establishing a superior record across the public sector, anchored, however, in people and employment programs.

In 1991, KRA began implementing its transitional service diversity strategy by developing comprehensive *Labor Market Research and Consulting* capabilities. By now, we knew that the best way to implement a start-up, or improve an existing, community-based,

workforce-services program was to evaluate, and improve where required, those already in operation.

KRA supported the missions of many USDOL agencies, including the Employment & Training and Employee Benefits Security Administrations; the International Labor Affairs Bureau; and the Offices of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Faith Based Community Initiatives, Grants Management, Job Corps, National Response, Outreach, Policy and Research, Public Affairs, Workforce Investment, and Reinvention.

Services included administrative, logistical, & management support; communications, outreach, information dissemination; evaluation & analysis/performance measurement; research; training & technical assistance; and website development.

KRA gained a wealth of experience and expertise through support-services contracts with many non-labor Departments: Agriculture, Education, Health & Human Services, Housing & Urban Development, and Transportation, most of whose programs provide wraparound services that directly affect an individual's ability to obtain and maintain sustainable employment.

Major not-for-profit clients included the Appalachian Regional Commission; EPA; FDIC; International Development Cooperation Agency; and several academic institutions, i.e. Hampton University; University of Maryland, Baltimore; University of Massachusetts; and Virginia Union University.

Growing rapidly, KRA diversified its services into operation and management of information-resource centers and clearinghouses, including cancer therapy, drug approvals, IT, retirement disclosure, fish and wildlife, disabilities &

rehabilitation, traffic safety, neurological disorders, education resources, skill standards, minority health, wastewater management, and substance-abuse prevention.

A very rewarding experience occurred when USAID-South Africa selected KRA to establish and manage the Pretoria based *National Clearinghouse for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship*, as a 5-year turnkey operation.

OUR TRANSITION: 2001 – 2010

During this period, KRA focused on direct-service delivery, developing educational and vocational skills of young adults in residential Job Corps Centers, and In-School-Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) programs in economically challenged neighborhoods, resulting in the State of Kentucky awarding KRA an *Outstanding WIA Program Award*.

Other youth programs included the Long Beach, CA, KRA Knowledge2Career (K2C) Academy; the New York, NY, *Dental Assistant Training Program*; and the ISY-based operations in Lower Savannah, SC, and South Hampton Roads, VA.

For a Greater Hartford, CT, multi-functional educational and job-placement operation, KRA developed strategies targeted to the needs of diverse populations, e.g., Jobs FIRST (Focused Intensive Reemployment Success Training) for highly successful workers displaced by sudden business closings, and (EAGER) Educate and Accomplish Goals for Employment Readiness for Temporary Cash Assistance customers.

Early on, KRA understood the value of human-centered development strategies to transition people to economic independence, applying them to other operations in Waccamaw, SC; Washington, DC; and Norfolk, VA.

OUR EXPANSION: 2011 – 2019

KRA continued to grow through acquiring new awards, as well as expanding the scope of services of existing contracts. Between 2011 and 2013, KRA started TANF operations through: *PGWorks* in Prince George’s County, MD; *Work Participation, Placement, and Support Services Program* in Baltimore, MD; and *Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment Program* in Camden County, NJ.

In 2012, KRA expanded to the West Coast to operate the San Diego Metro Region Career Centers for the San Diego Workforce Partnership.

On July 22, 2014, then-President Barack Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, reauthorizing the federal Workforce Investment System. As a forward-leaning company, KRA had already incorporated many of the new provisions into our integrated-services approach, positioning the company as a National Leader in Workforce Development.

In September 2018, in partnership with the Home Builders Institute (HBI), KRA celebrated the opening of our first Construction Academy in Maryland, and launched CTETechWorks to support the students’ continuing education during the pandemic “lock down” status.

In May 2019, the D.C. Department of Human Services awarded KRA a Human Care Agreement to implement and manage a new *Education and Occupational Training Program* to support participants with opportunities for High School or GED completion, OST, and credentialing to enhance their ability to seek and retain unsubsidized employment.



In March 2020, Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) restrictions were imposed nationally, and ahead of the curve, Mr. Atterbeary announced to staff, “Open for Business!” despite the

looming reality that program sites would close to the public.

With rapid-response efficiency, by April 1, KRA had transitioned the majority of program staff to a work-from-home status, equipping them with all the online connections, resources, and support services needed to operate effectively in a virtual work environment.

Despite the pandemic, KRA continued to expand services in several current programs, and accept awards for new program operations. Mr. Atterbeary truly appreciates the remarkable creativity, spirit, and resilience of all our staff during these times in starting up:

- A virtual classroom component to an OJT in the Connecticut manufacturing industry, in collaboration with the Center for Advanced Technology.
- Virtual-learning Workforce Readiness Workshops in Baltimore, which increased student participation by 300%.
- A virtual Job Fair for 70 employers and more than 100 jobseekers in San Diego.

- Blended IT Certification courses in Baltimore, in collaboration with MedCerts and CompTIA.
- In Nevada, a partnership with a local computer training school to make available an online IT curriculum for our customers.

In addition, KRA opened a second Construction Academy, in Baltimore City, with training focused on certification in Residential Carpentry and Facilities Maintenance.

In Chicago, KRA was selected to support the Shore Community Wellness Fellow Program's dislocated-worker staff who, during this time, provide community outreach; distribute food, personal protective equipment, and related essentials; and COVID-19 health- and safety-education information.

Also in Chicago, KRA virtually opened the new *Chatham Education and Workforce Center*, offering an array of on-line services, including resume writing, interview preparation, job-training opportunities, and employer-related services.

During these years, and still today, KRA was a significant supporter of national and state level trade associations through Board participation, sponsorships, workshops, and keynoting, regularly sending staff for the professional development experience.

THE FUTURE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE U.S.

At the end of 2020, there were **7 million** open jobs. What this seems to indicate is that despite the unprecedented number of COVID-19 business closings, forcing millions of workers out of their jobs, there were still not enough skilled, qualified workers to fill the jobs available.

The future training of workers for skilled jobs in a global economy will be different yes, because of technology, but driven by the skills gap and the millions of workers that are underprepared for today's and tomorrow's jobs. How we invest and collaborate with public education, community colleges, technical schools and private employers will shape the future public-private workforce system.

The economic trauma induced by COVID-19 will take years to correct and be accelerated through recovery-oriented workforce and education legislative reforms. Hopefully, two promising bills – proposed WIOA amendments will become signed legislation.

The 21st Century Skills and Relaunching America's Workforce Acts propose increased funding for supportive and training services and provide for local resources to help the unemployed connect to education, training, job opportunities, and other services to boost recovery from the devastating economic impact of COVID-19.

KRA is confident we will return to pre-COVID-19 program-site operations. Moreover, we are equally confident that certain lessons learned from adapting our service-delivery system to include virtual and other online platforms, will be maintained to continue refining various programs and processes. Every cloud, it appears, does have a silver lining.

40 YEARS OF GRATITUDE

KRA thanks more than 4,000 employees, many of whom were former program customers, who came through KRA's corporate and program offices, bringing with them a wealth of compassion, knowledge, and skill. Each of whom, through service, developed a commitment, dedication, and loyalty to our customers, our clients, and our company.



KRA thanks each of you, and your families for encouraging, supporting, and cheering you on! We hope you are better for your KRA experience, because we know KRA is better for your service.

Our Vision

To engage businesses, develop workers, and nurture stronger communities.

Our Mission

To provide businesses with a trained and reliable workforce by preparing jobseekers for today's competitive workplace and global economy.

Our Core Values

KRA's Core Values support our dedication to delivering solutions and services that result in the highest level of customer engagement and satisfaction.

Knowledge... our foundation for creating *Innovative Solutions*

Responsibility... our promise to continuously offer *Exceptional Services*

Achievement... our proven performance for delivering *Trusted Results*



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