



HISTORY

MAWD, the MetroWest Alliance for Workforce Diversity was founded in the Year 2000. The creation of this unique collaboration between the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce, business leaders and community leaders started as a result of the vision and commitment of a few concerned community members *from the South Middlesex Men's Club*. Since its inception, many of the MetroWest communities most vibrant businesses and professional organizations are now actively involved.

Early discussions about the need to connect businesses and the community's diverse members took place between the Chamber leadership and such individuals as Dr. William Tita, an educator and long-time MetroWest resident. Before long, Dr. Tita had engaged others in the discussion including many members of the South Middlesex Men's Club. At the same time, the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce contacted members to encourage a more formal approach to continued discussions about the value of diversity to those living, working and educating children in MetroWest. As a result the first official MAWD meeting was held and attended by chamber representatives, executives from area companies such as TJX and members of professional organizations such as the South Middlesex Men's Club and the MetroWest Human Resources Managers Association.

During the Year 2000, monthly meetings continued and milestones such as creating a vision, mission, clear objectives and electing formal leadership positions for MAWD were accomplished. The membership also increased and by year-end the early adopters of MAWD included such companies as TJX Companies, BJ's Wholesale Club, BOSE Corporation, First Act Inc., Lifeline, MetroWest Latin American Center, Selectstaff, and Unity First.

In the spring of 2001 the leadership of MAWD made a presentation to the Chamber Board with a request that the MAWD organization be officially designated as an official MetroWest Chamber affiliate. It was unanimously approved and the continuing support of the MetroWest Chamber is invaluable to MAWD's continued success.

In the past several years membership continues to grow and active members of MAWD now includes MassBay Community College, the Metrowest Medical Center, Staples and leading diversity consultants and trainers such as Barbara Holland of BGH Enterprises and Dr. Robert Bonnevie of the Palmer Group Inc.

MAWD accomplishments during the last several years include:

- Monthly meetings to share best practices
- Diversity Seminar featuring Martha Fields – held in May 2003

- 86 attendees representing over 50 organizations

- Excellent ratings from attendees – 97%

- September 25, 2003 – Forum on Cultural Competency
- Published Guide to MetroWest Diversity Resources Networking with aligned organizations such as Nubian Professionals, NAACP
- MAWD adopted a Strategic Plan in the Spring of 2005 reinforcing a long-term commitment from all participating organizations
- Referrals to agencies supporting diverse populations (ex. MetroWest Latin American Center, Brazilian American Association)
- Informal resume sharing/candidate referrals
- **METROWEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY on INCLUSION, DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP**