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## **Team NEO Launches Multicultural Business Attraction Initiative with Reception on Thursday, March 26**

**AKRON & CLEVELAND, Ohio, March 23, 2009** – Team NEO will launch its Multicultural Business Attraction Initiative with a reception on **Thursday, March 26, 2009 from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.** at the Team NEO Office at 737 Bolivar Ste. 2000, Cleveland, OH 44115. The reception is open to the public and owners of local minority businesses are encouraged to attend.

The Multicultural Business Attraction Initiative Launch Reception will serve not only as a launch celebration, but also as an opportunity to inform attendees on Team NEO's initiative to educate minority business owners on increasing jobs, growing Northeast Ohio's minority business network and affecting the regional economy positively. Attendees will also learn how their organization can benefit and become a part of this exciting initiative.

Team NEO's mission is to attract businesses worldwide to the 16-county Cleveland Plus region. Since focusing on business attraction in 2007, Team NEO has brought more than 20 new firms to Northeast Ohio, accounting for more than 2,200 new jobs and nearly \$78 million incremental annual payroll, leading to a total regional annual impact of \$150 million.

In 2008, Team NEO launched an initiative to showcase Ohio's attractive quality of life, highly educated and skilled workforce and business-friendly infrastructure for minority-owned enterprises. The goal of the partnership is to create a targeted message that resonates with minority business owners, and ultimately elevates Northeast Ohio's profile as a premier destination for diverse companies. The Charter One Foundation supports Team NEO's Cleveland Plus Business Multicultural efforts.

The main focus of this initiative, to date, has been marketing to national site selection consultants who influence company expansion projects. Team NEO supports marketing efforts for the Cleveland Plus brand nationally and internationally, presenting the region as an innovative and opportunistic location for business growth. The new Multicultural Business Attraction initiative will allow Team NEO to place a focus on recruiting minority-owned businesses that are looking to expand and would like to consider Northeast Ohio.

Team NEO began this initiative by asking Lonnie Coleman, a long standing member of the board of trustees and supporter, to chair a Team NEO Minority Business Advisory Committee. With this committee's assistance, Team NEO has created a plan to recruit more Minority Business Enterprises to Northeast Ohio, which includes partnerships with important organizations such as HBA and NOMSDC.

Team NEO has engaged Singleton & Partners to develop a marketing plan that helps meet this objective. Hot off the presses is a business attraction brochure that promotes the region's commitment to diversity and inclusion. It gives details about the benefits of doing business here – from our talented and skilled workforce to our robust transportation infrastructure. Furthermore, the brochure discusses specific state sponsored initiatives and incentives to support minority



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businesses, and profiles successful minority business leaders (some who are here today) that have discovered why Cleveland Plus adds up to success for their business.

The Cleveland Plus Region is a \$170 billion economy – but with only 15 staff members, Team NEO needs your help. It needs the entire Northeast Ohio business community to actively help attract new companies and new jobs to the region. Business owners: in your everyday business dealings, you may hear of companies that are expanding, merging, or that may be interested in relocating. By calling Team NEO, you can help get that company to consider Northeast Ohio. For example, last year, a banker at AmTrust put Team NEO in touch with a German company looking to enter the US – they are now looking to invest \$15 million and bring 100 jobs to the region.

For more information about this event and Team NEO, please contact Jeane' Holley at Singleton & Partners, 216.344.9966 or [Jeane@singletonpartners.com](mailto:Jeane@singletonpartners.com).

### About Team NEO

Team NEO markets Northeast Ohio to attract business investment in targeted industry clusters. A non-profit joint venture of the region's metro chambers of commerce, with funding from the Fund for our Economic Future, the Cleveland Plus Marketing Alliance, corporate support and regional metropolitan chambers of commerce including the Greater Cleveland Partnership, Greater Akron Chamber, Stark Development Board, Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber, Team Lorain County and the Medina County Economic Development Corporation, it represents over 4 million people in 16 counties. Team NEO serves as a central resource, informing and serving those considering investment in Northeast Ohio and is a co-founder of the Cleveland Plus Marketing Alliance, a coalition to drive strategic, long-term marketing for Northeast Ohio. For more information, visit [www.teamneo.org](http://www.teamneo.org).

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