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WE CAN SAVE OUR COMMUNITY' \ BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES OFFERED ADVICE \

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Building a successful business starts with making the most of what you have, no matter how small.

That's the advice Joe Dudley, winner of Inc. magazine's 1993 Entrepreneur of the Year award, gave black business owners Tuesday at the second-annual Minority Business Summit in Charlotte.

Success is "taking what you have and making it what you want," said Dudley, chief executive of Kernersville-based Dudley Products. He told the audience of about 75 business people that they can help the black community through their success in business.

"We can save our community. But the problem is, we blame other folk," said Dudley, 56, who shared how he built a \$34 million beauty-products empire starting with door-to-door sales 26 years ago. "Everybody's got enough of their own problems. We got to do something for ourselves. Everyone knows the black community has got to get into business."

Dudley's remarks highlighted the daylong conference, which was designed to promote business ventures in the black community. Representatives from several local banks and business-development groups were on hand to offer advice at the meeting, which was sponsored by Trend magazine, NationsBank, AT&T and First Federal Savings and Loan.

Dudley, whose business has grown to include a hotel, four beauty schools, a publishing operation and a travel agency, urged business owners to value small gains and view hardships as learning experiences.

"It's important to look for the advantages in the disadvantages," said Dudley. "What seemed like problems will turn into solutions."

Dudley's comments about black-owned businesses encouraged Juan Whipple, publisher and editor of Trend magazine, a Charlotte entertainment guide.

"I've always been a believer in us helping each other," Whipple said. "He gave excellent advice."

Gloria Chambers, who is trying to find a permanent location for her upstart Christian bookstore, agrees the community needs more black-owned businesses.

"I'd like to see more business done in the black community, not only from whites and Orientals, but

from black business owners as well," she said.

Thomas Springs, co-owner of Springs Design, said the summit helped further the goal of empowering the black community by giving entrepreneurs like himself a chance to network.

"Just the exposure is good," Springs said of his five-month-old printing company. "We're trying to introduce our product and make contacts, meet successful entrepreneurs and gather ideas on how to market our products."

Ticket proceeds from the summit will benefit the Anita Stroud Foundation, which offers academic tutors for low-income children, and Thursday's Child, which helps parents collect child support.

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1. Staff Photo by BOB LEVERONE: Trudy Bruster of A Unique Basket shows off her custom-designed gift baskets to Dr. Kirk Williams during Tuesday's second annual Minority Economic Summit in Charlotte.

2. DudleyEdition: ONE - FOURSection: BUSINESSPage: 1D

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