

# Richmond Free Press

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## Show them the money

Joey Matthews | 9/17/2015, 9:04 p.m.



Mama J's Kitchen co-owners Lester Johnson, left, and his mother, Velma R. Johnson, are working with Russell Bennett of Outdoor Affair Catering to provide food at the Libby Hill VIP tent during the UCI Road World Championships. Photo by Sandra Sellars

Monica Smith-Callahan, community engagement director for Richmond 2015, said the group held a vendor symposium in February at Richmond International Raceway and worked closely with the city's Office of Minority Business Development to "get the word out to African-American vendors, to learn what our needs are and what vendors we're looking to hire."

Officials from the Office of Minority Business Development did not respond to Free Press queries about those efforts.

Sam Young, president of Astyra in Downtown, said his company envisions providing about 100 workers during the races. He said they would construct and break down any structures related to the races. He said some workers would serve as drivers and course marshals and others would staff retail locations selling memorabilia.

"I think it's great," Mr. Young said of being involved in the races. "We are definitely going to make the most of it."

Sharon Dabney-Wooldridge, owner of Kleane Kare on South Side, said seven to 10 employees would perform housekeeping daily at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in Downtown.

Ken Johnson, owner of Johnson Inc., said his company "is providing marketing related services and stakeholder outreach" for the UCI races and had developed a video, "Time to Ride 2015," to promote the races.

West Cary Group developed the Navigate.Richmond2015.com website as a "guide for race participants, residents and tourists to explore multiple aspects of the elite event."

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The site includes information on course routes, street closures, transportation and parking options, according to a press release from West Cary Group.

"It was important for us to collaborate with Richmond 2015 and the City of Richmond in order to create a site that demonstrates how prepared we are for the global stage," stated Moses Foster, president and CEO of the company.

Ty's Hauling and Paving has been busy hauling and laying concrete across the city in preparation for the races.

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