

## Michael D. Jones always dreamed of working for himself.

Having worked in the masonry industry for 10 years, he decided that it was time to go out on his own. In 2001, he formed M. Jones Enterprises, LLC, which specializes in concrete, masonry, and asphalt work. His services are essential to the construction industry and for numerous building projects in St. Louis.

Jones attributes his motivation to become a business owner and diligence to succeed to his father. "My father told me, no matter what it looks like, you need to keep knocking on that door," Jones recalls. His father left the backbreaking work in the cotton fields of Mississippi to move to St. Louis to start a new life. With a high school education, his father worked in the automobile manufacturing industry for 40 years. He wanted his son to achieve success by operating his own business and to be a good provider. As Jones notes, "My father would call me every day to see what was going on. He taught me how to provide for my family and to help my siblings."

Doors opened for Jones. Following his father's advice, he took a leap of faith and started M. Jones Enterprises; however, he knows that owning a business requires commitment. As he says, "You need to have a serious meeting with yourself to determine if you are willing to put in the work and suffer the consequences, because it is not easy."

Jones's determination and perseverance have paid off. For more than 20 years, he has been a successful masonry contractor in St. Louis. For example, M. Jones Enterprises installed concrete pillars in a hangar at the Airport and completed work for other prestigious, citywide building projects. Jones utilizes his certification as an MBE firm and works with partners to complete jobs. He states that the BDD has been instrumental in his company's success.

M. Jones Enterprises continues to grow. Jones also accredits his success to a hard working staff. The company has seven employees. Jones takes a particular approach to the hiring process. As he explains, "I try to get people that normally would not have had an opportunity. I try to open doors for other people."

Beyond his company's success, Jones believes in paying it forward and giving back to the community. Each year he participates in and contributes to various organizations in St. Louis. His company donates book bags for back-to-school events, turkeys during the holiday season, and other items to families in need.

Jones is grateful for the opportunities that helped him grow his business and is appreciative of the people who helped him along the way. As he describes, "I thank God for all of the opportunities that have come my way and for all of the people who have pushed and supported me during my journey."