



## **Ariane Kirkpatrick**

*The AKA Team, President*

Ariane Kirkpatrick is the owner and president of The AKA Team. The AKA Team is a multi-faceted company including AKA Construction Management Team, AKA Team Commercial Cleaning, AKA Team Waterproofing and AKA Team Safety and Environment. She attributes her success to the company tagline, Always Known As ... the Team you can depend on by concentrating in detail.

Entrepreneurship was ingrained in Ariane at an early age. The year 1969 made quite an impression on Ariane Kirkpatrick. She vividly remembers being five years old and boycotting the neighborhood McDonald's with her family because African-Americans were banned from owning franchises. She attempted several businesses from a copy and printing business, restaurant and residential rehab business. In between her time as a business owner Ariane was the Chief of Housing for the City of Warrensville Heights Building Department where she received several accolades for her commitment to the housing industry, as well as performing building inspections for commercial and residential buildings.

Ariane's dream was to always go into business with her family. That dream came true in 2007 when her sister and brother-in-law became franchise owners of ServiceMaster by Davis, a cleaning service. ServiceMaster had the honor of servicing President Barack Obama's Campaign for Change airplane early one morning in August 2008 during the campaign. A call for business later in the month from Joe Biden's crew proved it was a job well done. ServiceMaster by Davis was recognized in 2008, along with Wal-Mart and General Colin Powell by the National Urban League with the Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

In 2009, Ariane made the decision to start yet another endeavor which has proven to be successful. The AKA Team has worked on several projects such as the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Medical Mart Convention Center, Flats East Bank, CMHA Administration Building and many more. Ariane had the opportunity to sit with President Obama at the Winning the Future Forum held in Cleveland and discuss obstacles that affect small businesses. With the advice of the President, Ariane has found ways to increase her business.

Ariane is very involved in the spirit of community and is a true lover of the City of Cleveland. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Non Profit Administration at Cleveland State University and is alumni of Cuyahoga Community College, where she was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa and a proud Warrensville Heights Tiger Alum. She is an active member of St. Agnes + Our Lady of Fatima, Presidents' Council Foundation, Construction Employers Association, and the 11th Congressional District Caucus. She served as Co-Chair for Catholics for Obama and Small Businesses in Ohio for the 2012 Presidential election. Ariane is the recipient of several awards including; HHW Women on the Rise, Kaleidoscope Entrepreneur Award, Who's Who in Cleveland, Presidents' Council John Bustamante Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year Award; Diversity Matters Julian Earls Community Achievement Award, Heineken Tastemakers 25 Influential Women in Cleveland for 2013 and inducted into the Warrensville Heights High School Hall of Fame in 2013. In 2014, Ariane was recognized by Crain's Cleveland Magazine as a Women of Note.

Her proudest accomplishment is being the mother of two sons, Ali and Kristopher, and she is the proud wife of Danny Couch and has two step stepdaughters, Camille and Jazmine.

While the journey isn't complete, Ariane realizes that both she and the business world have come a long way since 1969.