



Business Leaders Linked to Encourage New Directions
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Steelcase Inc. hosts BL²END professional development event

Young professionals of color impacting the greater Grand Rapids community

Grand Rapids, Michigan, September 18, 2009 – BL²END, *Business Leaders Linked to Encourage New Directions*, an emerging young professional of color organization presents a professional development event. **The event will take place on Monday, September 28th at 6 p.m. and will be hosted by Steelcase Inc. in the Steelcase University Learning Center, located at 901 44th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508.**

BL²END's 2009 professional development initiative theme of "Global Leadership Opportunities," will provide timely, insightful information in understanding the impact of the global economy in today's business environment and job market. **The second of three 2009 professional development events will feature a candid dialogue with Brian Cloyd, Steelcase Inc.'s Vice President, Global Community Relations.** Cloyd will share insight and perspective, under the theme "Global Leadership Experiences & Opportunities," on the role of the global economy within today's job market and business climate and the leadership opportunities available to young professionals. **The event will include an insightful dialogue between Brian and event attendees. Brian will also share information about his educational, professional and community leadership journey.**

Brian Cloyd joined Steelcase Inc. in 1978, and is the vice president of Global Community Relations for Steelcase Inc., the global leader in the office furniture industry. This role, which Brian assumed in September 2006, is an expansion of his previous position as director of Corporate & Community Relations for Steelcase North America. Brian is responsible for coordinating Steelcase efforts in the areas of diversity, government relations and public policy, corporate relations and community giving and volunteer programs. He also works with the environmental team to ensure that Steelcase's sustainability strategies are included in the broader point of view.

Cloyd serves on the boards of directors for the West Michigan Center for Arts & Technology, Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, the Economic Club of Grand Rapids, the Michigan Minority Business Development Council, and the Workforce Development Council. He serves on the board of the Grand Rapids University Preparatory Association. Brian is a member of the board of trustees for Northern Michigan University, the advisory council for the College of Arts and Education for the University of Detroit Mercy, and the advisory council for Grand Valley State University College of Business. Additionally, Brian is a member of the Executive Leadership Council and the editorial board for Diversity Executive magazine.

The event is free and open to the public; however, **an RSVP is required via email to info@grblend.org or phone to Maxine Gray, BL²END Professional Development Chair, at 616.520.7298.** For more information regarding BL²END and upcoming monthly events, visit www.grblend.org.

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The mission of BL²END is to foster an environment of growth and belonging, where young professionals of color can connect with each other, develop professionally, and contribute to the local community.