

Sonia Flunder-MacNair

Trailblazer Awardee

An innovator, creator and leader, who has broken new ground as a woman entrepreneur.



Sonia's journey into entrepreneurship was sparked by a life-altering event—a post-surgery complication that nearly claimed her life. This experience ignited a profound personal transformation, leading her to recognize local food insecurities and the scarcity of naturopathic alternatives. Encouraged by friends who often visited for herbs and foods from her garden, she turned her passion into a career, giving birth to her business.

Establishing her business was a formidable challenge for Sonia, but her resilience shone through. From securing capital to finding a prime location amidst fierce competition, she faced numerous hurdles. However, she tackled these obstacles with a unique approach—integrating urban farming to produce her own raw materials. This not only eliminated intermediaries and enhanced product quality but also provided a local herb supply for her community, setting her business apart from the rest.

Sonia's dedication to naturopathic medicine began in high school when her mother was diagnosed with Lymphoma cancer and given six months to live. Her mother chose holistic treatment, but as her condition worsened, Sonia took over her care, immersing herself in naturopathic medicine at a young age. A local health food store owner mentored her, teaching her to build a wheatgrass farm for medicinal purposes. This knowledge extended her mother's life far beyond the initial prognosis and laid the foundation for her future endeavors.

SONIA Organics has not only made a significant economic impact but also become a source of pride for Toledo. As a 100% black woman-owned business, it is a testament to Sonia's resilience. Despite surviving a complete rebranding and a major website hack during their most profitable season, they emerged stronger. Their transition to SOrganics® under government trademark protection not only safeguards their recipes, products, and logos but also symbolizes their commitment to quality and innovation.

This is a business that the community can truly be proud of. Sonia's entrepreneurial journey has been marked by a commitment to community growth and equitable success. She doesn't just serve the community, she is a part of it. By integrating community support into her business model, she challenges the status quo. Her mission is to teach self-sustaining lifestyles and help others achieve their own success, demonstrating that business growth and community development can flourish hand in hand. SONIA Organics has been a revenue generator and a source of holistic education and alternative medicine for her community. Establishing Urban Wholistics, a 501(c)(3) organization, addresses the lack of green spaces in historically excluded areas. Urban Wholistics offers youth programs, farming instruction, and free plant and seed events to promote home growing. These initiatives, including health education and beautification efforts, have transformed Tatum Park into a community pride point, attracting visitors from far and wide. By nurturing community growth and providing valuable resources, Sonia's business has not only thrived but also significantly contributed to the well-being and pride of the local community.

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Website – sonia-organics.com

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