

# Deneen Wiley-Dean

As the Founder and Executive Director of The SoloExecutive Foundation, Deneen Wiley-Dean is the visionary architect behind a bold and transformative movement designed to elevate Black Solopreneurs across Ohio. Through The SoloExecutive Foundation, Deneen is not simply supporting businesses; she is building a structured pathway for Solopreneurs to develop executive capacity, strengthen economic mobility, and position themselves to create jobs, circulate wealth, and leave enduring legacies.

Her work is grounded in a belief shaped by lived experience: **entrepreneurship is not defined by formal credentials, but by vision, discipline, and the ability to execute.** While many measure readiness by degrees or MBAs, Deneen represents a different reality, one built on decades of real-world business development, revenue generation, and operational leadership across multiple industries. She understands firsthand what it means to build without access to traditional support systems, professional networks, or executive guidance, and more importantly, what it takes to succeed anyway.

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## **Professional Foundation & Leadership Development**

Deneen's professional journey is a testament to disciplined growth, resilience, and strategic advancement. Her career foundation was shaped during her tenure at NASA Glenn Research Center (formerly NASA Lewis Research Center), where she supported complex IDIQ contracts and gained firsthand experience in federal procurement, compliance, and high-level operational systems. It was within this highly structured and performance driven environment that her leadership discipline, organizational precision, and systems thinking approach were refined.

From that foundation, she advanced into senior-level executive support and operational leadership roles, mastering the infrastructure that sustains successful enterprises. Her hands-on experience across administrative leadership, payroll management, financial operations, procurement, event management, and executive coordination has shaped her into a strategist with a deep understanding of what makes organizations function, scale, and succeed.

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## **Community Leadership & Service**

An ordained Deacon, Deneen Wiley-Dean has a deep-rooted commitment to service, leadership, and community impact. Her work reflects a consistent dedication to supporting others, strengthening organizations, and creating meaningful growth opportunities. She has served as Chairperson of a community festival, leading the planning and execution of large-scale events that strengthened community engagement and increased participation among diverse stakeholders.

As former Chairperson of the Pastoral Committee, she provided leadership in supporting church operations, guiding ministry initiatives, and working closely with pastoral leadership to address the needs of the congregation with care and accountability. She also served as a resume writer for J.O.B.S., assisting individuals in developing professional resumes, strengthening employment readiness, and positioning them for career advancement opportunities.

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## **Early Entrepreneurial Foundation**

Deneen's entrepreneurial journey began in 1989, marking her first successful business venture. Rather than relying on traditional one-on-one sales, she created a scalable model through curated "purse parties," hosting between four and six events weekly and generating revenues exceeding \$50K+ annually over multiple years as a side hustle. In the 1990s, she expanded her business portfolio by launching a retail kiosk at the Mall in North Carolina, offering fragrance lamps, oils, soaps, whipped shea butter lotions, perfume oils, and gift baskets. This venture consistently generated between \$5,000 and \$8,000 per week for 9 months to a year before she returned to Ohio. These early ventures reflect a consistent pattern: identifying opportunities, building systems, and generating revenue across multiple industries long before entrepreneurship became widely supported or structured.

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## **Executive Leadership & Business Innovation**

Having built and sustained businesses independently since 2007, Deneen Wiley-Dean launched ExecutiveOne, LLC with vision, discipline, and a forward-thinking model that was ahead of its time. Long before remote virtual executive support became mainstream, she pioneered a work-from-home virtual executive services model despite skepticism, limited support, and widespread doubt about its viability. While others questioned the

concept, Deneen built it. Operating independently, she scaled ExecutiveOne into a respected and sustainable enterprise, supporting more than 400 organizations as a Virtual Executive Assistant and operational consultant. Years before the term “Virtual Assistant” became widely recognized, she was already delivering high-level executive support, strengthening internal systems, and enhancing leadership infrastructure for growing businesses. Without external backing or an industry blueprint, she built what others could not yet see. In every engagement, she provided strategic executive support, improved operational efficiency, strengthened financial and administrative controls, and positioned leadership teams for measurable performance and sustainable growth. ExecutiveOne became more than a service; it became proof that vision, when paired with discipline and execution, creates lasting impact.

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### **Entrepreneurial Expansion & Creative Leadership**

Deneen’s leadership extends beyond corporate systems into creative entrepreneurship. She is the author of the acclaimed cookbook *Simplicity Never Tasted So Good* and the founder of Jus Fork It - Catering To Go...On The Go. Over the course of 10 years, she built and sustained a successful catering business, serving more than 300 clients, many of whom became repeat customers. In addition to catering, she produced baked goods including cakes, brittle, and cookies, supplying local shops, bars, and grocery stores. Her culinary brand reflects the same principles that define her executive work: structure, creativity, excellence, and consistency. She has built a reputation for delivering exceptional experiences both in the boardroom and at the table.

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### **The SoloExecutive Foundation**

Today, Deneen leads The SoloExecutive Foundation with a clear and intentional mission: to close the gap between self-employment and scalable business growth for Black solopreneurs. **The challenge is not a lack of talent ... it is a lack of infrastructure.** Too many solopreneurs are building businesses without financial systems, without a consistent revenue strategy, and without an operational structure. They are expected to lead, grow, and scale without ever being given the tools to operate at an executive level. **We don’t exist to explain the gap ... we exist to close it.**

Through its flagship initiative, the **Bridge Forward Program**, the Foundation provides a structured, executive-level development model designed to equip Solopreneurs with the systems, strategy, and leadership capacity required to build sustainable, scalable

businesses. This work is deeply personal. **Deneen represents what is possible without traditional credentials, but with discipline, experience, and execution.** Her journey reflects decades of building, refining, and sustaining businesses across industries, proving that lived experience, when structured and supported, is a powerful form of expertise. This is not general business support. This is **intentional, outcome-driven development** designed to move Solopreneurs from hustle to hire, from self-employed to employer. Because when Solopreneurs are equipped to operate like executives, they don't just grow businesses, they create jobs, strengthen communities, and build lasting economic impact.

**This is more than a program ... it is a movement.**