



"Now" on PBS visits Cleveland worker-owned laundry, new on DVD

Published: Friday, January 28, 2011, 1:52 PM Updated: Friday, January 28, 2011, 1:58 PM



By [Chris Ball, The Plain Dealer](#)

"Fixing the Future"

In a recession, innovative business strategies take on a new urgency. In this inspiring 2010 episode of the PBS series "Now," host David Brancaccio tours the country meeting people thinking outside the box to create sustainable, long-term, local jobs.

Brancaccio, former host of public radio's business program "Marketplace," was Bill Moyer's hand-picked choice to succeed him on "Now" when he retired at the end of 2004. Brancaccio has a relaxed, comfortable manner that helps audiences follow along when he talks about complicated subjects like jobless recoveries and sustainable practices.

His second stop is Cleveland. He visits [Evergreen Cooperatives](#), a worker-owned laundry that opened in 2009. Operations manager Medrick Addison shows off the East 105th Street facility's energy-conserving equipment while describing how a job is different when you own a share in it. "Being an owner, you do pretty much whatever is required, whatever, and I mean whatever," he says proudly. "Whatever we have to do to make this company successful, I'm up for doing it."

They also visit the nearby Cleveland neighborhood where Addison grew up, an area hit hard recently by foreclosures. "You know, you kinda feel cast aside, thrown away in a sense, you know?" Addison says. "And to have some positive like the Evergreen initiative come about, it was like a god-send, you know? It was, you know, it was just what the neighborhood needed, you know? We can't help everybody, but we're helping somebody, you know?"

The Evergreen laundry has come up with ways to save on water use, Brancaccio says, but creating jobs is

the key. Addison says he thinks the enterprise will succeed because of who they hired. "This is their last chance of being, you know, of having a productive future or really doing something for their children or their self, those people, their backs are to the wall. So they know, 'Hey, I can't mess this up,' you know? And that's what we're betting on."

The forward-looking program doesn't stop there. It explores other advanced efforts including an alliance called Sustainable Connections, in Bellingham, Wash., a business forum supporting sustainable economic development; the Tiny House Movement, also in Bellingham; Yo Mamas Catering Cooperative in Austin, Texas; Bremer Bank, in Fargo, N.D., which emphasizes local lending; and a time bank in Maine called Hour Exchange Portland, which facilitates people bartering their services.

Unrated, 56 minutes. From [PBS](#). In stores Jan. 25.

© cleveland.com. All rights reserved.