



**Phone:** (316) 978-3193  
**Email:** [ksbdc@wichita.edu](mailto:ksbdc@wichita.edu)  
**Address:** 1845 Fairmount  
Wichita, KS 67206-0148, USA

### **Miller's Bar-B-Que, Inc.**

Kansas SBDC Advisors: Frank Choriego and Emily Rishel



Melody McCray-Miller's experiences and accomplishments are filled not only with diversity but with proof of dedication and perseverance demonstrating nothing but the purest intentions to serve her surrounding community. Her journey began alongside her husband, Larry, when they founded Miller's Bar-B-Que in the early 1990's off of 13th Street in Wichita. As the establishment grew, Melody shifted her focus from managing the restaurant to developing

and marketing the award-winning Bar-B-Que Baked Beans to sell to grocery stores and distribution centers. From there, she continued with her efforts to make change not only for her business, which she built from scratch, but also for her surrounding community. From 2005-2013, Ms. Miller served as State Representative for the 89th House District of the State of Kansas. On top of these accomplishments, her list of accolades includes being the first female African-American on the Board of Sedgewick County Commissioners and making significant reform to childhood education and the juvenile justice system while serving as a state legislator.

Ms. Miller came to the Kansas SBDC at Wichita State University in October of 2019, where she consulted with advisors Emily Rishel and Frank Choriego. They began discussions on the distribution of her Bar-B-Que Baked Beans to local grocery stores, with the vision in mind to one day make the move to an international market. During advising sessions, the three of them worked on creating a consistent brand across online platforms, including website and social media sites. Kansas SBDC Advisor Emily Rishel assisted Melody in updating and managing her social media pages, allowing Melody to maintain relationships with her long term customers while trying to reach out to new ones.



**Phone:** (316) 978-3193  
**Email:** [ksbdc@wichita.edu](mailto:ksbdc@wichita.edu)  
**Address:** 1845 Fairmount  
Wichita, KS 67206-0148, USA

After settling on a solid flow of marketing materials and a unified brand, Melody consulted with Kansas SBDC Advisor Frank Choriego to begin identifying her target audience across the country. They engaged in market research to narrow down potential customers. Based on the research, Melody decided to further expand across the country before starting a hard push for international expansion using a distributor who markets in Canada.

Such a rich and diverse background and hard work ethic sets Melody McCray-Miller apart from others. She shows no signs of slowing down as she continues to grow her business and to help her community flourish.