

Glynn and Sheldon Lloyd

Their catering company feeds their neighbors, builds community, and honors the Earth. **BY CHRISTINE RICHMOND**

fLOWER BOXES WITH VIVID PURPLE BLOOMS and a bold, black-and-yellow sun logo grace the outside of City Fresh Foods, a catering business in Dorchester, Massachusetts, a racially diverse Boston neighborhood. Inside, two brothers, Glynn and Sheldon Lloyd, and a crew of 35 are busily preparing quality ethnic meals—and improving their community in the process.

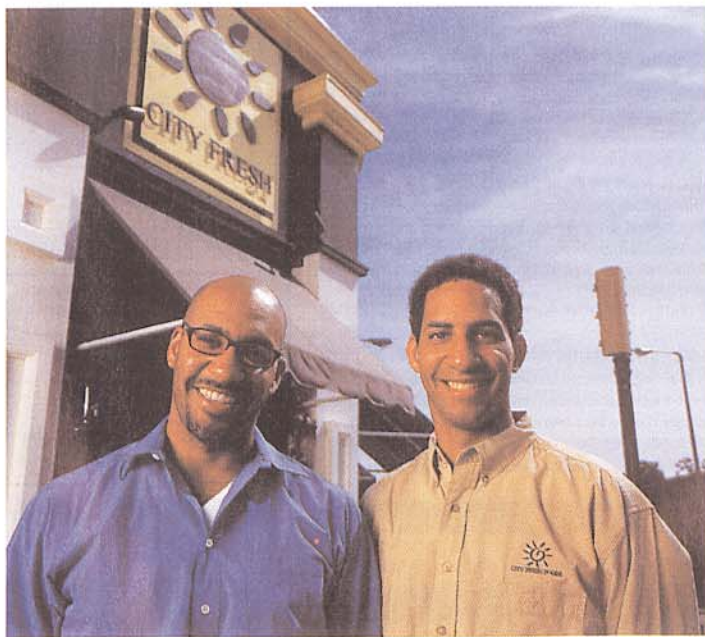
City Fresh started simply in 1994 when Glynn—then a teacher at the Log School, a settlement house in Dorchester—was trying to help his students find jobs. He hit upon a novel idea: Why not start a business hiring locals to prepare lunches for area businesspeople? Soon afterward, Boston's ElderCare Alliance contacted Glynn with a request: Could City Fresh supply the neighborhood's homebound elderly with the ethnic foods they longed for? So Glynn and his students began providing Southern and Latin meals to the seniors. Sheldon, 37, whose background is in banking and corporate sales, came on board in 1996 to help direct and manage the catering company's growth.

Today City Fresh delivers 1,400 meals a day to Boston-area seniors. Fried chicken with candied yams, fish in coconut sauce, and other traditional Southern, Haitian, and Latin meals are cooked, packaged, and delivered (in an electric-powered truck) by a staff of neighborhood residents. City Fresh also provides meals for eight charter schools and caters local events, such as weddings and parties.

The Lloyds have partnered with dietitians to make their meals heart-healthy yet tasty, and with the Food Project (a charity that recruits urban and suburban youth to grow food for the needy) to bring in local organic ingredients. Glynn, 34, deeply feels the company's sense of mission; he has seen how the food industry focuses on mass production and profits over quality, and "basically, it really scares me," he says.

City Fresh prides itself on quality and customer care. The Lloyds survey their customers constantly and carefully evaluate the feedback. They also extend that care to their employees: In addition to recruiting workers from the community, the Lloyds provide classes in ESL (English as a Second Language), computer training, and one-on-one coaching so that employees can improve their skills and move up. Case in point: The current delivery manager used to be a driver.

When asked what makes the two brothers such a



good team, they laugh. "I'm the dreamer," says Glynn. "And I'm more nuts and bolts," Sheldon adds. Future plans for these entrepreneurs include delivering to more areas of Boston and experimenting with new menus, like Russian. Says Glynn, "This is all about the people who live here creating a service for the people who live here." †

SHELDON (LEFT) AND GLYNN LLOYD OUTSIDE THEIR CATERING BUSINESS.