

LONG VERSION

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

“We Are Together” 124th National Black Business Conference Returns to Atlanta

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the World Conference of Mayors

Tuskegee, AL, Monday, April 15, 2024 – The National Alliance for Black Business (2022), co-founded by The National Business League ® (1900), National Black Chamber of Commerce ® (1993), and The World Conference of Mayors ® (1984), is thrilled to cohost the NBL’s 124th National Black Business Conference ®. Set to take place from August 21-24, 2024, at the Hilton Atlanta in downtown Atlanta, GA, this highly anticipated event coincides with Atlanta Black Business Weekend ™, promising an exhilarating gathering of the nation’s foremost Black business leaders and community luminaries.

Building upon the resounding success of last year's conference, which commemorated the 30th Anniversary of the National Black Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1993, and drew over 1,900 attendees, this year's event holds even greater significance. It marks the 40th Anniversary of the World Conference of Mayors, established in 1984. The World Conference of Mayors stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of Black Mayoral leadership and economic empowerment across global Black communities. This year's milestone also pays homage to the 50th anniversary of the Southern Conference of Black Mayors' inaugural National Conference in 1972 at the Hilton Atlanta Hotel. Notably, Daniel "Chappy" James, the first four-star Black general in the Air Force and a Tuskegee Airman, served as the keynote speaker, illuminating the path for the remarkable journey of Black elected leadership in the years to follow. The lineage of Black mayors' organizations commenced with the founding of the Alabama Conference of Black Mayors in 1972, subsequently expanding into the Southern Conference of Black Mayors in 1974, and the National Conference of Black Mayors in 1978 (now the African American Mayors Association since 2014). This evolution culminated in the establishment of the World Conference of Mayors in 1984, further extending into the Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance in 2014.

Mayor Johnny Ford, who also served as co-founder to the preceding Black Mayors organizations before founding The World Conference of Mayors, expressed his excitement for this year's event, stating, “As we celebrate the historic 40th Anniversary of The World Conference of Mayors, we acknowledge the pivotal role Black mayors play in the economic development of cities, towns, and historic settlements. These legacies trace their roots back to the visionary

leadership of Booker T. Washington and pave the way for the future of Black Mayors all over the world.”

The conference agenda will spotlight the profound impact of Black mayors in fostering entrepreneurship, economic development, and community growth, echoing the visionary principles championed by Booker T. Washington. In 1881, Lewis Adams (Town) and Booker T. Washington (Gown) joined forces to establish Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, now known as Tuskegee University, in Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. This institution was surrounded by a historic Black settlement, conceived by Dr. Washington, which, though never formally incorporated, was assigned its own zip code: 36088. This collaboration between "Town" and "Gown" laid the groundwork for further partnerships in central Alabama.

Fast forward to 1901, during the 2nd annual conference of the National Business League (NBL), Booker T. Washington invited Mayor S. L. Davis, who was elected in 1899 as the inaugural Mayor of Hobson City, Alabama, the first fully incorporated all-Black town in the state, to deliver the keynote address. Dr. Washington urged African American communities nationwide to establish their own towns, settlements, and educational institutions. What began as a seed planted in Tuskegee in 1881 had now blossomed into a national movement. By this time, historic all-Black towns had begun to emerge across the country, including Princeville, NC (1885); Eatonville, FL (1887); Mound Bayou, MS (1887); Hobson City, AL (1899); and the community of Grambling, LA (1901), which later became the home of Grambling University.

Today, this legacy endures with over 1,000 historic Black towns and settlements and more than 100 Historic Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the nation. The upcoming conference will showcase these Black-owned businesses, professionals, and elected leaders from various corners of the country and around the globe.

Anticipated to attract hundreds of Black-owned businesses, professionals, and elected officials from around the globe, the conference will serve as a dynamic platform for networking, knowledge-sharing, and forging strategic partnerships with city, state, national, federal, and global resources, and leadership. The event is hosted by local, Black-led business institutions, including the Atlanta Business League, Greater Georgia Black Chamber of Commerce, and the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council.

About National Alliance for Black Business (NABB):

The National Alliance for Black Business (NABB) was established on Tuesday, September 2022, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. NABB was co-founded by The National Business League (founded in 1900), the nation's first and largest organization for Black businesses and professionals in the country; the National Black Chamber of Commerce (founded in 1993), the country's first and largest federation of Black chambers in the United States and globally; and The World Conference of Mayors (founded in 1984), the world's largest association of global Black Mayors both domestic and abroad. Currently, NABB boasts a membership of over 50 national organizations, united in their commitment to advancing toward a unified Black business agenda with the theme “We Are Together.”

Join us as we celebrate unity, resilience, and the vibrant spirit of Black entrepreneurship at the 124th National Black Business Conference in Atlanta! Register Today:
www.nationalblackbusinessconference.com

[Photo: Former President Theodore Roosevelt speaking at the 11th Annual National Negro Business League Convention in New York City, New York on August 17-19, 1910. Copyright © The National Business League]