



CIAA MINORITY BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM RETURNS TO THE PROGRAMMING LINEUP FOR THE 2019 CIAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Day-Long Business Conference Convenes February 28 at Charlotte Convention Center

Charlotte, NC (Dec. 18, 2018) - The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA®), the nation's first African-American athletic conference, is bringing back the highly anticipated Minority Business and Leadership Symposium as part of the off-court activities during the 2019 CIAA Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament. The Symposium takes place February 28, 8:00am – 2:00pm at the Charlotte Convention Center. Conference presenters include the CIAA, Fifth Third Bank, NC Education Lottery, the National Black MBA Association® and Black Enterprise.

The popular event brings together top multicultural business executives, emerging leaders, entrepreneurs and business owners from around the southeast region and beyond. Attendees engage in sessions with CIAA corporate partners, business leaders and business resource partners on the latest business trends, ranging from leveraging data to optimizing business strategy, securing access to capital, managing wealth, customer engagement and effective leaderships skills. A highlight of the day-long conference is an exclusive Fireside Chat with CIAA Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams and Jesse Tyson, President and CEO, National Black MBA Association® (NBMBAA®)

Tickets for the Symposium go on sale on Tuesday, December 18, 2019 at CIAAtournament.org. Registration is \$50 before February 1 and includes lunch. Late registration is \$75 through February 18 or until capacity is reached. Hotel reservations are also available now and can be booked at CIAAtournament.org.

"The Symposium is a great addition to the basketball tournament and we're thrilled the timely and impactful information resonates with local, regional and national attendees. We are grateful for the partnerships with Fifth Third Bank, National Black MBA Association®, Black Enterprise, NC Education Lottery and others," said CIAA Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams. "The commitment and support from each organization is a tribute to their commitment to connect, build, and elevate the Charlotte community's business, finance and leadership expertise."

"Fifth Third's commitment to businesses is anchored in the belief that an environment conducive to business success is a key driver in the building and maintenance of strong and sustainable communities," said Byna Elliott, Chief Corporate Community and Economic Development Officer, Senior Vice President, Fifth Third Bank. "We are proud to sponsor the CIAA Tournament and provide tools to empower individuals and communities."

Another featured session is Selling Your Products and Services through Storytelling, Hosted by Black Enterprise, Cox Media Group (CMG) Charlotte, and the City of Charlotte, featuring a conversation with Derek T. Dingle, SVP and Chief Content Officer, Black Enterprise, and Cedric Thomas, General Manager and VP, Cox Media Group.

Key Symposium speakers, participants include: Billy Dexter, Partner, Heidrick & Struggles, Cassius F. Butts, founder and CEO, Capital Fortitude Business Advisors, Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., Chairman and Chief Executive Office, TWD, Inc., Kala Gibson, Senior Vice President, Head of Business Banking, Fifth Third Bankcorp, Kimberly A. Blackwell, CEO, PMM.

Additionally, NMBBAA® will partner with the CIAA to host the NMBBAA® Black Think Executive Roundtable as an added, invitation only gathering within the Symposium. NMBBAA® Black Think will bring together a group of diverse thought leaders in the academic, government, nonprofit, corporate, and private sectors to lead discussions about best practices to achieve maximum success for businesses. The primary goal of each conversation is to utilize insights gathered to develop a set of national recommendations in five impact areas: Education, Corporate, Policy/Legislation and Government, Community and Capacity Building Organizations and Mentorship.

"This symposium will bring to the table key challenges and barriers that African Americans face in reaching entrepreneurship. The insights gained will provide the NMBBAA® a platform to develop and execute on key programs, tools and resources to help our members better plan and prepare to build their own businesses," said Jesse J. Tyson, President and CEO, NMBBAA® .

The NC Education Lottery is the presenter of the Signature Business Panel Luncheon during the symposium. "We are pleased and extremely excited to be a Presenting Partner of this impactful CIAA event that reflects our commitment to supplier diversity and diverse talent in our workforce, said Annette Taylor, Director of Minority Business Outreach & Community Affairs for the NC Education Lottery. "We believe in the value of stimulating the economic and intellectual growth of minority businesses and are proud to continue making the CIAA Tournament a memorable experience for businesses, HBCU students, and fans from communities around our state."

About the CIAA

Founded in 1912, the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) is the first African American athletic conference and one of the most recognized conferences in Division II. The CIAA conducts 14 championships attended by more than 150,000 fans from around the country. Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, the CIAA is governed by the Presidents and Chancellors of its 13 member-institutions: Bowie State University, Chowan University, Claflin

University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Johnson C. Smith University, Lincoln University of Pennsylvania, Livingstone College, Saint Augustine's University, Shaw University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, and Winston-Salem State University. For more information on the CIAA, visit theciaa.com. For more information on the CIAA Basketball Tournament, visit CIAATournament.org, like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

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