

Greater Black Nashville Chamber of Commerce

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PRESS RELEASE

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Greater Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce – New Leadership, New Direction

Nashville, TN – August 26, 2005 – “Two steps back, three steps forward.” The phrase has never been so applicable to an organization as it has been to the Greater Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce. Since January 2005, the Black Chamber has installed new board members, revised its mission, completed an organization audit, and relocated to 4121 Clarksville Pike, Suite 8, Nashville, TN 37218.

“After taking a long hard look at the organization, we decided that it was important to slow down, acknowledge those who have provided the foundation for this organization, and use that foundation as a springboard for moving forward,” says Darren L. Johnson, who offered to function as the Interim Executive Director on March 7, 2005. Johnson, an organization development consultant and author, has helped lead the way for this new direction. Two major outcomes of revamping the Nashville Black Chamber are an organization audit and the new office location. “It is all a part of the new face for the Chamber. During the audit, our membership survey data proved to be a critical element in helping us rediscover the value of the Chamber, which will ultimately create future growth opportunities for the Black business community,” says Johnson.

Charles Sueing, Chairman of the Board for the Chamber has also played an integral part of Chamber’s new direction and mission, which is to “economically empower the African American community through the promotion, education, and advancement of its businesses, and their partners.” As the new Chairman, Sueing has provided the support, leadership, and the flexibility for the Chamber to take two steps back and apply Johnson’s inside out approach to its development. Sueing has been working diligently with the new 13 members Board, which includes Sherre Miller Bishop, Cathy Bender-Jackson, Alphonso Bodie, Vic Lineweaver, Hortense Price-Jones, and Tracey Kinslow. “We have a strong Board of Directors who are dedicated to our mission and are excited about this new direction,” says Sueing.

In taking two steps back, the Black Chamber has accomplished much in 2005. Currently, it is planning for the 2006 calendar year of activities. “This year it is necessary for the Black Chamber to be still and stay away from the public eye. Sometimes it is important to just be still, which applies to individuals and to organizations alike. Being still allows one to re-discover the purpose and meaning for existing and creates opportunity for growth & change,” says Johnson, whose six-month contract ends September 7, 2005. “We have decided to focus more on the needs of our membership. Our membership is asking for new development and new programs, and we will deliver,” says Sueing.

The Chamber’s Annual Membership meeting is scheduled at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 15, 2005 at the Essence Day Spa, 1511 Jefferson Street in Nashville. The entire Nashville business community is invited to this historical meeting. It will be the official kick-off to a new direction for the Greater Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce. Minority business owners and members of the Nashville business community are encouraged to attend. For more information on the Greater Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce call 615-876-9634 or email them at info@nashvilleblackchamber.org.