

Adams Announces International Franchise Association and Member Brands Join HBCU Partnership Challenge



From Spencer, Sam <Sam.Spencer@mail.house.gov>

Cc Christie, John <John.Christie@mail.house.gov>

Date 2021-09-21 14:23

Adams Announces International Franchise Association and Member Brands Join HBCU Partnership Challenge

Washington, D.C. – Today, **Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12)**, founder and co-chair of the **bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus**, announced the **International Franchise Association (IFA)**, along with member brands **Choice Hotels International, Inc., Inspire Brands, Papa John's International, Wendy's, and Williams Chicken**, is joining the **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Partnership Challenge**. IFA members **McDonald's** and **Hilton** previously joined the Challenge, **bringing the total number of HBCU Partnership Challenge participants to 78. [The HBCU Partnership Challenge is an effort to promote greater engagement and support between private companies and HBCUs.](#)**

"Franchises unlock opportunity for tens of thousands of small business owners every year, so I'm excited that the International Franchise Association and many of its members are taking the HBCU Caucus Partnership Challenge. The Partnership Challenge believes that our historically Black colleges and universities are the foundation of any strategy to ensure our workforce is diverse and inclusive. The aim of the Challenge is to unlock opportunity for the 300,000 HBCU students in the US, as well as the institutions they attend, by building partnerships between HBCUs and the private sector. As a two-time HBCU graduate, as well as a professor for 40 years, I know you can't have diversity and equity in the workforce without HBCUs. Thank you to IFA and its

members for recognizing the power of partnerships," said **Congresswoman Alma Adams, founder and Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus.**

Matt Haller, IFA President and Chief Executive Officer stated, "We are honored to work with Congresswoman Adams and sign-on to the HBCU Partnership Challenge with our participating member companies. The franchise sector has always been a leader in diversity, equity & inclusion, yet we all must strive to do more to continue to break down barriers to advancement. In 2018, more franchises were locally owned by minorities than non-franchised businesses, giving credence to how franchising is a tremendous pathway to entrepreneurship, and we are thrilled to work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities nationwide to engage the talented young leaders emerging from these schools."

Additionally, Adams joined IFA and the **U.S. Black Chambers (USBC)** for an in-person discussion on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) at the IFA Leadership Summit on September 21. The discussion was moderated by Talisha Bekavac, Vice President of Government and External Affairs at the U.S. Black Chambers.

The Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus' Partnership Challenge is a bipartisan effort to promote greater engagement and support between private companies and HBCUs. Congresswoman Adams created the Challenge in 2017 to strengthen public-private relationships with HBCUs to ensure the schools' future sustainability, increase career prospects for their students, and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within all sectors. The Challenge encourages participating organizations to make greater investments in HBCUs as well.

The Caucus hosts numerous events every year including HBCU STEAM Day of Action, HBCU Day, the HBCU Braintrust, the Virtual Partnership Luncheon, and the Diversity in Tech Summit. For more information, please contact Sam Spencer (Sam.Spencer@mail.house.gov).

About Alma Adams

Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte) and serves as Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education & Labor Committee, where she serves as Chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee. In 2015, she founded the first bipartisan Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Caucus in Congress.

The International Franchise Association is the world's oldest and largest organization representing franchising worldwide. IFA works through its government relations and public policy, media relations, and educational programs to protect, enhance and promote franchising and the more than 733,000 franchise establishments that support nearly 7.6 million direct jobs, \$674.3 billion of economic output for the U.S. economy, and 2.5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). IFA members include franchise companies in over 300 different business format categories, individual franchisees, and companies that support the industry in marketing, law, technology, and business development.

The U.S. Black Chambers (USBC) is the voice of Black business owners and a top advocate for resources and policies that impact Black business owners. To learn more visit: usblackchambers.org. Follow our work and connect with us: <https://www.facebook.com/usblackchambers> and [instagram.com/usblackchambers](https://www.instagram.com/usblackchambers).

###