

# BLACK MAYORS INSTRUMENTAL IN BLACK BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Significant Impact of Black Political Strength Restated at National Conference of Black Mayors Convention

PHILADELPHIA — The dramatic increase in the number of black mayors in the United States has been especially important to the growth of black businesses nationwide, according to Richard G. Hatcher, former mayor of Gary, Ind.

Speaking at the 14th Annual Convention of the National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc., Hatcher, who is president emeritus of the conference, echoed the thoughts of many convention participants, observing that black mayors have been instrumental in assisting minority entrepreneurs compete for municipal contracts.

"Most black mayors have ordinances requiring that minorities provide a certain percentage of goods and services needed by their cities," Hatcher said, "and this has been of great importance to the black economy in their communities."

Hatcher said that during his tenure as mayor, more than half of the contracts let by the city of Gary went to minority firms.

Representing the 300 black mayors of American cities and towns, convention delegates focused on the theme "Balancing Economics with Human Resource Development."

Mayor James L. Usry of Atlantic City, who was elected president of the conference during the convention, agreed that minority business development should continue to be one of the most essential concerns of black mayors.

"The need for continued growth in minority businesses is important to all Americans both politically and economically," said Allene S. Roberts, manager of public affairs for Philip Morris U.S.A. "Strong minority businesses make the minority communities more viable and this, in turn, strengthens the nation." Philip Morris Companies Inc., a sponsor of a convention event, spent a total of \$215 million with minority firms in 1987.

During the convention, Washington, D.C., mayor, Marion Barry, was honored at a special "Tribute to a Black American" dinner for his outstanding achievements as a former president of the conference.



The Rev. Jesse Jackson (left) congratulates Mayor Marion Barry of Washington, D.C., who was honored at the "Tribute to a Black American" dinner, a highlight of the 14th Annual Convention of the National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc.



Michelle D. Kourouma (right), executive director of the National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc., chats with Allene S. Roberts, manager of public affairs, Philip Morris U.S.A., during the conference's 14th Annual Convention in Philadelphia.

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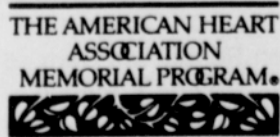
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#### COUNSELOR

Salary: \$1,232-\$1,715/Monthly  
Plus Excellent Benefits

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Send resume to: Sharon White

#### Oregon Human Development Corp

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