

Group to Drive Business to Black Car Dealers

By Jazelle Hunt
NNPA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON— According to IHS, an international industry data company, Black Americans spent an estimated \$8.4 billion on cars in just the first four months of 2015. In the coming year, the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. (USBC) is determined to direct that cash toward Black-owned dealerships.

“In the Asian community, their dollar stays in their community 28 days before it ever leaves,” said Ron Busby, president and CEO of the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. “In the Hispanic community, their dollar stays 21 days before it ever leaves. But in the Black community, our dollar leaves within six hours. So we don’t have to worry about the majority not supporting us, we’re boycotting our own.”

The USBC is a national association of more than 100 African American Chambers

of Commerce and small business organizations working toward Black economic empowerment. In signing a memorandum of understanding with the National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers (NAMAD), the USBC hopes to appeal people in the market for a new car to buy from Black dealers.

The agreement will connect Black car dealers to their local Black chamber of commerce, and will encourage the chambers to get the word out. The USBC also has an interactive listing of Black-owned car dealerships included in its online Black business database.

“It’s not just about, ‘OK, go buy a car from Mercedes or BMW, but, ‘If you want a BMW...here’s where you should go to [make] those purchases,” Busby explained. “The thing we determined is, let’s say you’re in a community and there’s not a Black-owned dealership of your [car] choice. We



will contact the Black dealership [nearest you], and he will either meet or beat the price of that local dealership in your community, and ship it to you free of charge.”

In addition to making it easy to buy Black when car shopping, the partnership will examine whether automakers are returning the favor of Black patronage by re-investing in Black communities.

“We outlined where, which cars African Americans were spending money. And it was ironic that Toyota was the number one car for African American spending,” Busby said. “Are they spending money with us – that’s where we want to make sure. Are they advertising in our Black newspapers? Are they hiring Black employees? Do we own their dealerships?”

The USBC-NAMAD agreement is the fifth year of such agreements for the USBC, which aims to grow Black economic power by driving Black dollars to Black businesses, particularly in industries that already attract many Black customers.

Black consumers can also foster these efforts via the USBC mobile app. Powered by GPS, it allows users to find Black retailers, service providers, and more in their current area, in real time.

“The reason that other communities and ethnic groups don’t have many of the same concerns that we have is because they are in control of their own economies. We very seldom in our conversations, talk about an economic agenda, and at the end of the day this is still a capitalistic society,” said Busby.

College Fund Launches Apple Scholars Program

By Freddie Allen, NNPA Senior
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – On Tuesday [Aug.25], the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf) opened the application process for the Apple HBCU Scholars program to help the most valuable company in the world identify the next generation of high-performing leaders of color in technology.

The program, which targets students attending historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), includes a scholarship for up to \$25,000 during the recipient’s senior year, a summer internship at Apple headquarters in Cupertino, Calif., career-development opportunities, and the chance to serve as a TMCf Diversity Initiative/Apple brand ambassador.

Students will also earn the opportunity to participate in the Apple HBCU immersion experience in Cupertino, Calif., during the spring of 2016 and access to an Apple employee for a unique mentoring experience.

In the press release about the launch of the program, Denise Young Smith, the vice president of Worldwide Human Resources at Apple Inc., and a graduate of Grambling State University in Louisiana, said that the program is about exposing gifted students from HBCUs to careers in technology.

The tech industry has recently come under increased scrutiny for its lack of diversity by civil rights leader Jesse Jackson and others after companies like Google, Apple and HP published data on the ethnic and gender diversity of their workforces.



A group of Thurgood Marshall College Fund interns. The Apple HBCU Scholars program is just one element of the \$40 million partnership between TMCf and Apple.

“We’re big believers that innovation will be strongest when talented people from diverse backgrounds are part of the creative process,” said Smith.

The Apple Scholars program is just one element of the \$40 million partnership between TMCf and Apple announced earlier this year that will include the development of a talent database for hiring managers, research grants for faculty members and investments in entrepreneurship programs.

“The call out to our community is that when an organization as big and as well-known as Apple says, ‘I’m going to invest in you,’ they have actually lobbed the ball into our court and, if we miss it, we’re going to be hard-pressed to argue that HBCUs are relevant and worthy of future investments,” said said Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., the president and CEO of TMCf.

The application process closes September 18, 2015. Learn more at www.tmcf.org/our-scholarships.

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