

# **Onward: Association of Black Alumni Organizations**

BIG 10 Alumni CEO Winter Meeting  
Sheraton Chicago  
Parlor F (located on the lobby level)

**Tuesday, December 13**

## *Creative Overview*

### **OBJECTIVE:**

The Association of Black Alumni Organizations exists to provide a unique opportunity for communication and growth among the country's Black alumni and the higher education community. The leadership of the BIG 10 Alumni Associations wish to foster the development of this national network of college and university Black alumni and their respective campus-related alumni organizations. In addition, ABAO in partnership with the BIG 10 and MAC Alumni Associations will:

- Grow and celebrate Black Alumni Organizations throughout American higher education; phase 1, BIG 10 Universities and MAC Universities
- Provide Black alumni, contemporary access to content, programs, and services that ensure that Black Alumni live a productive and well-being life
- Serve as a strategic conduit through which college educated Black alumni will connect to each other professionally, personally, and intellectually
- By sharing best practices and strategies, provide value to and have impact on Black Alumni Organizations, their leaders and their respective communities
- Enable Black alumni to share experiences, talents and resources—without boundaries
- Re-connect Black graduates to their respective university(ies) of degree
- Serve as an dynamic advocacy group in support of pipeline development of Black youth at the local, state, and federal levels
- Serve as an indispensable voice for the value of education throughout all facets of American culture
- Promote the value and importance of Black philanthropy within our communities and to our respective alma maters

### **SUCCESS:**

- Leverage the personal, professional and intellectual experiences of Black alumni in all facets of BIG 10 higher education;
- Significantly increase the number of Black alumni who are involved in key leadership and volunteer roles on our respective campuses; specifically our Black Alumni Organizations;

- Establish programmatic measurements that indicate growth and advancement of Black alumni involvement, leadership and philanthropy in our BIG 10 campuses;
- Effectively involve Black alumni in mentoring of each other and with key constituents of our respective campuses;
- Overtime, increase emotional and philanthropic support for higher education and the respective universities of degree of Black alumni; and
- Strategically involve the alumni in a rewarding, fun, pride-rich and engaging experience in and around the university's mission of teaching, research and service.

### **STRATEGY:**

The BIG 10 Alumni CEOs, with support staff from our respective organizations and other strategic campus partners, will focus on the following key value propositions, to ensure the success of the initiative:

1. Effective target marketing of Black alumni, friends and faculty/administrators about the initiative
2. Focus on delivering a quality "customer experience" using feedback and data from Black alumni, faculty staff and others
3. Increase measurable levels of Black alumni connectedness to our BIG 10 institutions
4. Understand the alternative options (or lack thereof) for Black alumni/donors to participate
5. Remain alumni centric in the execution of each and all initiatives
6. Share best practices amongst organizations and associations

### **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:**

BIG 10 Alumni CEOs will deliver these value added experiences, leveraging the talents of staff, for alumni and friends of BIG 10 Universities. Proposed strategic partners:

- BIG 10 Alumni Associations
- MAC Alumni Associations
- Campus Presidents and Provosts
- Targeted Foundations (e.g. Gates, Ford, Carnegie, etc.)
- NCAA
- Others?

### **TARGET AUDIENCES:**

#### *Primary Audience*

- Black alumni and allies who have an interest in partnering with faculty to enhance the teaching and learning experience of students to include recent graduates, mid-career and titans of industry (senior executives/professionals)
- Leaders of American higher education
- Government (e.g. Department of Education, Congress, etc.)

### **POSITIONING:**

The Association of Black Alumni Organizations is intended to actively involve, inspire and engage Black alumni in higher education's delivery of quality education, service and philanthropy. Moreover, once fully operational, ABAO will enable busy Black alumni professionals to volunteer in service to the schools of the BIG 10/MAC in a manner that is timely and well defined.

### **KEY INSIGHTS:**

- For Black alumni– each experience/initiative through ABAOs must be highly Black alumni-centric and "on brand," yet with new, fresh texture and interesting add-ins for them to find increased value and even "surprise" in the BIG 10/MAC's new in-line strategies
- Black alumni participating in the initiative are likely to be very busy and connected to others in many ways before and during the experience. It is likely they are already overbooked in terms of their professional and personal lives. To this end, the BIG 10 leadership's primary work must be to create an experience that will make participating in a visit to campus or a conference through Skype a "better volunteer choice" than other choices they may have.

- This must be positioned as the most elite and value driven experience for all who come into the brand of the program
- Higher education needs Black alumni to align with higher educational objectives for each volunteer experience
- Focus each “touch” in a manner that is true to the style and personality of the campus’ alumni and beneficial to the overall mission of the respective BIG 10 School.

#### **KEY MESSAGE:**

This unique Black alumni volunteer opportunity will dramatically help advance higher education, especially the BIG 10/MAC institutions, while delivering a world-class engagement experience for today’s and tomorrow’s Black students (all levels). Through the experience, Black alumni will ensure that today’s students (past, present and future) are prepared, personally and professionally, to go out into the world and serve as a force for action and growth in their own lives, as well as the lives of alumni, globally.

Moreover, this organization and its work, could possibly serve an invaluable role in reducing poverty, dropout rates among Black K-12 students, crime, illiteracy, and the list goes on and on. The issue of most importance is to break the poverty cycle by increasing the numbers of at-risk-youth who receive access to higher education, complete high school, and more important, receive a college education.

#### **KEY MESSAGE SUPPORT:**

- Showcase “Pride and Benefits of being a graduate of a BIG 10/MAC institution—connectivity and networking”
- Focus on major themes: A dynamic, enjoyable, and purposeful experience to help advance higher education, Black Alumni, and key initiatives that will ensure a preferred future for targeted communities

#### **TONE/IMAGERY:**

- Smart, enjoyable, engaging and purposeful
- Contemporary, sophisticated and hip
- Contemporary colors, icons, being part of the “Community”
- Ensure appropriate diversity
- In promotional materials, use engaging, active, energetic and vibrant photos that help to tell the story and illustrate the value and impact of the initiative

#### **EXECUTIONAL CONSIDERATION:**

- Regional logistics issues (e.g. traffic, location, schedule needs, etc.); when face to face
- Creatively work across multiple platforms with quality and consistency – web and communication pieces.
- Adjust message to the perspective of the audience

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

- Website
  - abao.us
- Email
  - ABAO- [querich03@yahoo.com](mailto:querich03@yahoo.com)
  - Marcus Clarke- [maclarkejr@att.net](mailto:maclarkejr@att.net)
  - Huey Ball- [hueylball@gmail.com](mailto:hueylball@gmail.com)