



Canfield, Kimbro Empower Black MBAs to Navigate Complex Challenges to the Top

Members of the country's largest organization for minority business professionals learn from the pros the secrets of success

SAN DIEGO (October 12, 2005) – Best-selling author Jack Canfield encouraged business executives and entrepreneurs attending the National Black MBA Association's (NMBBAA) Leadership Institute Wednesday to remove the phrase "I can't" from their vocabulary if they want to be successful.

"When you get impulses you've got to act on them," said Canfield, author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul book series, who spoke about how individuals should take responsibility for their success and surround themselves with an aura of positive energy. "Your thoughts are like a multiple email. If you broadcast a negative message, people will pick up on it."

Canfield was one of the featured speakers at the day-long Leadership Institute, sponsored by PepsiCo, which is part of the NMBBAA's 27th Annual Conference and Career Expo this week at the San Diego Convention Center. The conference features the country's largest career fair in which attendees can interview with representatives from more than 350 of the Fortune 500 companies.

Also sharing insights into achieving personal and professional success was Dr. Dennis Kimbro, who engaged professionals by offering his findings crucial to entrepreneurial success. Kimbro stressed the need to dream big and build your own brand, citing former fashion model turned restaurant owner and lifestyle expert B. Smith who hosts the syndicated television show "B. Smith with Style".

Launched two years ago, the Leadership Institute is just one of several highlights of the NMBBAA's annual conference, the largest gathering of minority business professionals in the country. More than 11,000 people are attending.

"Innovation comes from networking, and at this conference you find people with a gleam in their eye," said James Dallas, CIO of Georgia-Pacific, which has 108 employees attending the conference. "We have brought our top minority talent to grow them through exposure to leaders in both established and emerging companies."

Self-described "serial entrepreneur" Vanessa Enoch of Cincinnati is attending the conference for her seventh time. She said Canfield motivated her to look at the barriers to success in her life and change them. "In the past, I've tended to chicken-out before giving an idea the opportunity to manifest," Enoch said. "I think the challenge for many people, including entrepreneurs, is to follow through."

The Leadership Institute was sponsored by PepsiCo, which has been involved with the NMBBAA for more than 30 years. “It’s the jewel of the personnel pipeline for PepsiCo,” said Maurice Cox, PepsiCo’s vice president of corporate development and diversity. “It brings to us people who are prepared, dedicated and committed to the success of our company.”

Other seminars focused on “Driving Innovation through Diversity” and “Strategies for Working in Today’s Demanding Environment.” During the “Confronting the Speed of Change” seminar, Dr. Ancella Livers of the non-profit Center for Creative Leadership encouraged busy professionals to take breaks from their heavy workload and reflect on the complex challenges facing them.

“Sometimes we have to take a time out,” said Dr. Livers. “The minute you think you don’t have time for a time out, you need to get up from your desk and take a walk.”

This year’s NMBBAA conference was originally scheduled to be held in New Orleans but was relocated to San Diego in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In an effort to assist MBA students displaced by the disaster, the organization has launched a Student Empowerment Relief Fund with a goal of raising \$1 million.

The conference ends on the evening of October 15th with a black-tie gala hosted by actress Lynn Whitfield. Spiritual leader Bishop T.D. Jakes will receive the organization’s prestigious Chairman’s Award for service.

In addition to the Leadership Institute, this year’s NMBBAA conference will award \$300,000 in scholarships to doctoral, graduate, undergraduate and high school students.

Celebrating its 35th anniversary this year, the National Black MBA Association is dedicated to creating partnerships that result in intellectual and economic wealth in the black community. With more than 6,000 members, the association represents 100,000 MBA graduates. The NMBBAA is headquartered in Chicago and has 39 local chapters across the United States.

For more information on the NMBBAA or the 27th Annual Conference and Expo, please visit www.nmbbaa.org

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