

1. Back to Africa: Chuck DeBow, Vice President of Programs, will be participating with a US Chamber of Commerce trade mission to **Ghana, Kenya and Ethiopia** during February 19 – March 1. Anyone seeking specific information that Chuck may find during the trade mission should contact him via cdebow@nationalbcc.org. Mission participants will meet the presidents, secretaries of commerce and chambers of commerce of each nation plus business owners. Bon Voyage Chuck!

2. A Growth Move: The NBCC is creating a new subsidiary. We will launch a 501©4 corporation within the next month. All advocacy and public policy actions will come from this division. This will protect and keep the integrity of our 501©3. This will also enable us to become more active in shaping up good public policy on Capitol Hill as well as state capitals throughout the nation.

3. Congressional Testimonies: Last week, we testified before the House Oversight and Reform Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Environment. Copies of our written testimony are available [\(1\)](#)

, [\(2\)](#). The verbal remarks covered PLA's, Offshore Oil Moratorium, EPA Regulation, Net Neutrality and "List and Dis" activity in federal procurement. Our participation was reported in every newspaper in the nation – WOW!

4. Presidential Guest: On February 7, President Barack Obama gave a speech at the US Chamber of Commerce. NBCC members participating in the event were me, Kay DeBow, Ernest Green, John Harmon, Dan Packer and Carroll Robinson. Kay and I got a chance to shake the President's hand and say a few kind words to him [\(picture\)](#)

5. Gainful Employment Rule – a hustle? The Gainful Employment Rule would cease federal student loans for those matriculating through for profit colleges. Forty percent of the students at these schools are minority. This would have a terrible impact on our future workforce. We now find that the main instigators of this proposal are the Wall St. short sellers. Yes, the same people who concocted the sub-prime mortgage scandals that conned Blacks out of 35% of their national net worth. One of the short sellers actually gave a speech

entitled “Sub-prime goes to College” revealing how they are manipulating the US Department of Education to crash the stock value of for profit colleges. It’s time to fight back!

6. List and Dis: Some of the Department of Defense prime contractors are negotiating scope of work with our members so that their contracts can get approved by the SBA (8a, Disabled Vet, Minority, Woman, etc.). The reality is they list these firms but have no intention of using them. They get the contracts signed and then kick our firms to the “curb”. Anyone who has recently been a victim of the “List and Dis” activity should contact me immediately. We are going to Congress with the evidence and seek punitive action against the perpetrators.

7. Phredley goes to Hollywood: Those of you who attended our Inaugural Gala in January, 2008, may recall the entertainment provided by my nephew Phredley. Since that time God has been good to his career. Last Sunday we saw him perform at the Grammys. Yes, Fredly is the keyboardist and background singer for the hot performing group

Bruno Mars

. Besides performing the guys also won a Grammy! You have grown up nicely Phredly.

8. In January we celebrated the changing of our chairs at the Washington DC Four Seasons. Sherrie Gilchrist, Arnold Baker and I gave remarks; you can [see the videos here.](#)