

1. Time to Register for Fall Summit: Our upcoming Fall Summit, Nov. 17 – 18, 2012, Sonesta Hotel, New Orleans, LA is ready for registrations and hotel room bookings. The [Agenda](#)

is out and if anyone wants to make suggestions please contact Kay at kdebow@nationalbcc.org

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[room rate of \\$169](#)

is limited and is on a first come, first serve basis (cut off is 10/16). Come and join us and learn of all the exciting things that are going on.

2. Right On for Free Trade: We are glad to see that President Obama has finally signed Free Trade Agreements with South Korea, Panama and Columbia. It is up to Congress to seal the deals. This will enhance our entrepreneurial activity within the African Diaspora as Columbia and Panama both have significant African American populations. These agreements will help create over 250,000 American jobs and add over \$10 billion to our gross domestic product. Senate and House: Pass this bill!

3. Congressman Rush Moves for Africa Trade: Congressman Bobby Rush (D-IL) has introduced HR 656: The African Investment and Diaspora Act ("AIDA"). The purpose of the bill is "Advancing U.S.-Africa trade and development relations and, ties between Africa and the African Diaspora in the United States." We will do all we can to make this bill a reality. This is just a continuation of Congressman Rush's passion towards the betterment of the 54 nations on the African Continent. He and Congressman Donald Payne (D-NJ) are the Co-Chairs of the African Globalism Committee. Stay tuned for more developments.

4. Your HubZone may have Disappeared: Notice to all businesses that are certified as being in a HubZone. The SBA has just updated their HubZone designations based on the 2010 Census. If you are a HubZone or are planning to apply, you should contact your SBA district office immediately to find out about the changes. This may have serious consequences on contracting and jobs.

5. Success with the Kenya Summit: Last week the Kenya Embassy and the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) hosted a thorough presentation on the upcoming opportunities within this nation. We brought 51 architectural and engineering firms for serious two way discussions. 98% of the attendees were "happy campers". For example: "I would like to thank the National Black Chamber of Commerce for organizing the "Doing Business in Kenya" event

last week, as well as the Kenya delegation for graciously hosting our gathering of entrepreneurs and taking the time to elaborate on the vision that is the Kenya Vision 2030 program. There were many exciting opportunities discussed during last week's session. My firm looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to Kenya's ongoing journey toward economic, social and political prosperity." The productive journey begins!

6. An Attempt to Improve HUD: We applaud House Small Business Minority Leader Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) for her introduction of The Affordable Communities Employment Act of 2011. This bill addresses the laxity of HUD's own Section 3 of the HUD Act. It further addresses the requirement that 30% of all new jobs (funded with HUD money) are given to people living under the poverty level and 10% of all contracts be given to businesses that hire them. It has been on the books for 43 years and, still, HUD refuses to enforce the program. We hope this works. Also, we are considering collaborating with some legal firms with the thought of filing lawsuits against recipients of HUD funding under the False Claims Act. There will be improvement one way or the other. We are looking at 300,000 new jobs per year.

7. A Quiet Betrayal: Federal minority business programs have been managed by seven US presidents. There have been challenges but still the programs prevailed. Now under the present president the programs are silently being eliminated. HUD, which under the last administration, achieved 40% of its contracting to minority owned firms. Today, that number is in a single digit and heading straight "south". NASA, Defense, Coast Guard and FEMA have dropped minority goaling. According to the Acting Chief Procurement Officer for FEMA, "FEMA does not have small business goals for this recovery (Hurricane Irene) ... FEMA does not maintain information on the percentage of black businesses receiving Government contracts." Strange, is that the same FEMA that worked with our members to bring in over \$3 billion in contracting after Hurricane Katrina? It is going away y'all!! We need to wake up and begin to counter this stealth "dagger" that is being put into our economic backbones.

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