

EST. JUNE 2007



African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY



JOHN HARMON

THE JOURNEY

Accredited State Chamber
of Commerce with Distinction
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

1 LETTERS FROM
DIGNITARIES

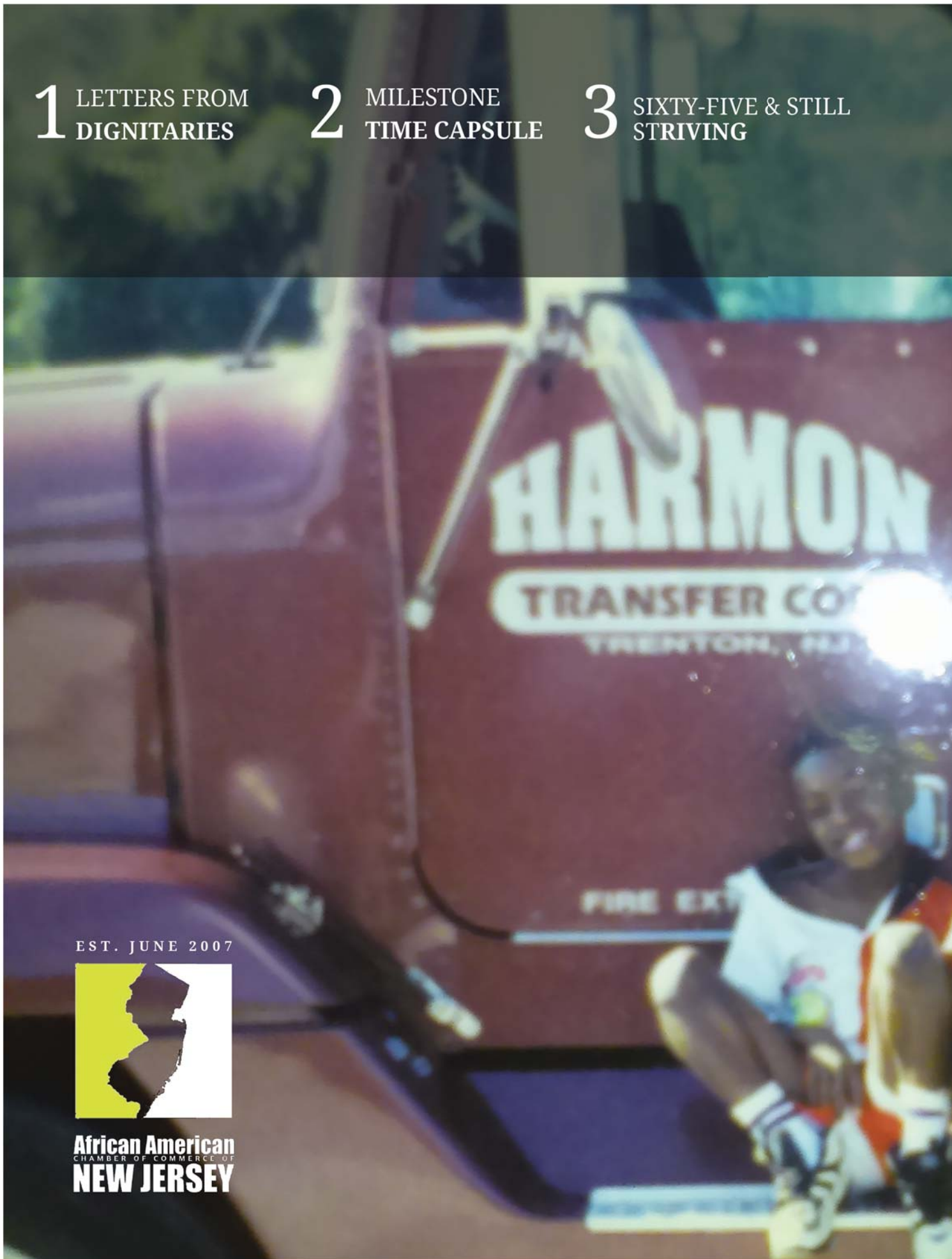
2 MILESTONE
TIME CAPSULE

3 SIXTY-FIVE & STILL
STRIVING

EST. JUNE 2007



African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY



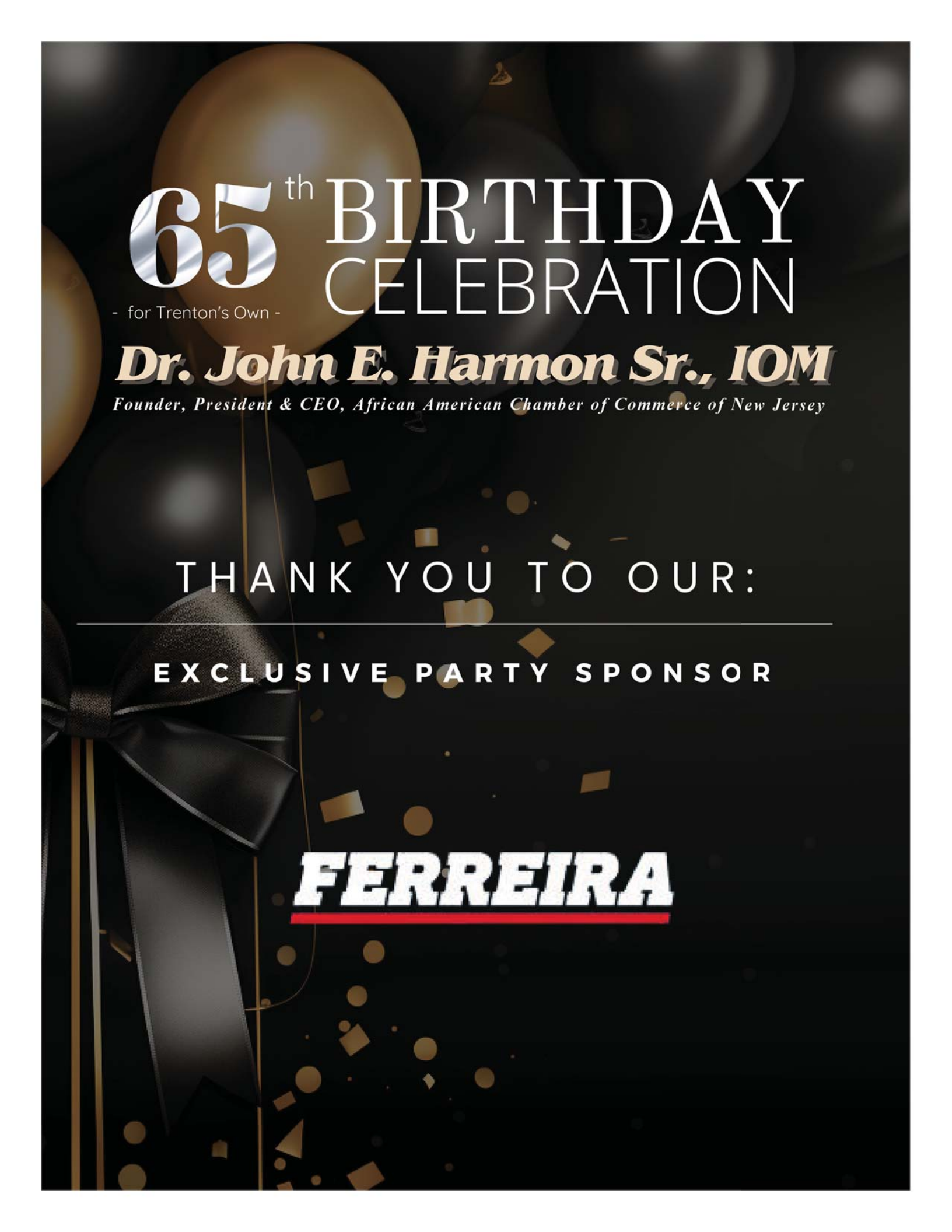
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A black and gold birthday celebration poster. The background is black with gold balloons, confetti, and a large black bow on the left. The text is in white and gold. The main title is '65th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION' in a large, serif font. Below it is a subtitle in a smaller, sans-serif font. The name 'Dr. John E. Harmon Sr., IOM' is in a bold, gold, serif font. Below that is a subtitle in a smaller, italicized, sans-serif font. The text 'THANK YOU TO OUR:' is in a large, white, sans-serif font, followed by a horizontal line. Below the line is 'EXCLUSIVE PARTY SPONSOR' in a white, sans-serif font. At the bottom is the name 'FERREIRA' in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a red underline.

65th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

- for Trenton's Own -

Dr. John E. Harmon Sr., IOM

Founder, President & CEO, African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey

THANK YOU TO OUR:

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NEW JERSEY
AMERICAN WATER

EST. JUNE 2007



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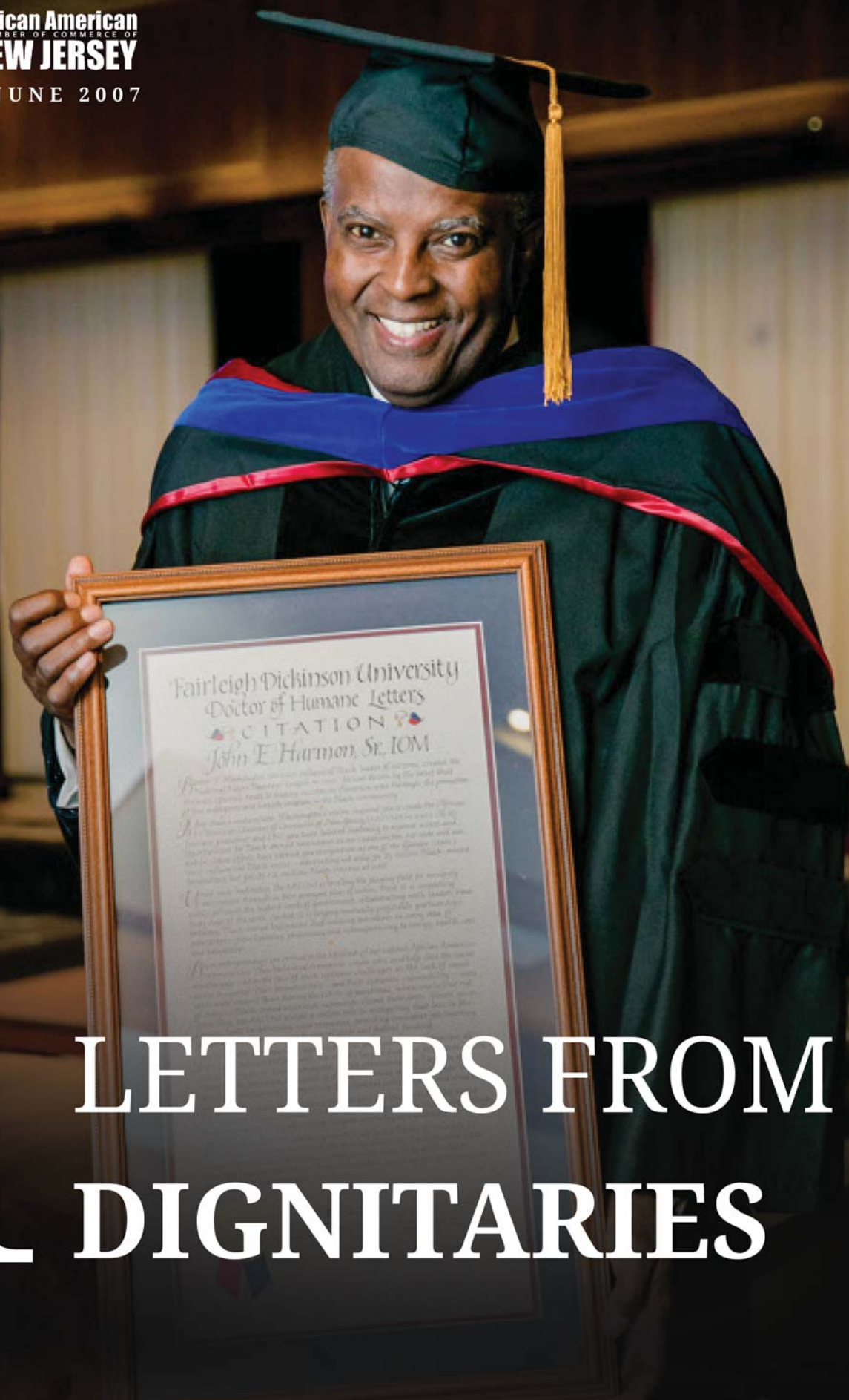
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FREEMAN
ATTORNEY AT LAW
CALLAGY LAW

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ELIZABETHTOWN
GAS



1 LETTERS FROM DIGNITARIES

September 23, 2025

Dear John,

Happy 65th Birthday!

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire membership of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, I want to extend heartfelt congratulations to you on reaching this milestone.

As Founder and CEO, you have built an institution that now stands strong with more than 800 members. That accomplishment is not only a testament to your vision and determination but also a reflection of the trust and respect you have earned across the business community.

Your unique ability to build bridges across party lines, to connect small and large businesses, to bring together government and the private sector, and to unite diverse ethnic communities has strengthened both our Chamber and the great state of New Jersey. That gift of bringing people together is at the heart of your leadership, and it is what continues to make the Chamber such a powerful force for change.

It is both an honor and a privilege to serve as Chairman of the Board alongside you. I thank you for your unwavering commitment and your example of what it means to lead with courage, integrity, and purpose.

John, may this birthday be a celebration of all you have accomplished and a launching point for the impact still to come. On this special day, we celebrate not just your years, but the legacy you continue to build.

With gratitude and admiration,



Gary Mann
Chairman of the Board
African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey
Founder & CEO
Jasfel Analytics



EST. JUNE 2007

“Reflections”

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

Dear John,

On behalf of the staff, and adjunct staff, we extend our warmest birthday wishes to you. We hope you thoroughly enjoy celebrating your milestone 65th birthday this evening with your beloved family, friends, colleagues and all who have gathered to celebrate this momentous occasion, with love and respect for you.

On a personal note, it has been an honor and a privilege, over the past fourteen years, to work alongside you as we have navigated challenges and celebrated successes together. Your unwavering dedication to our mission sets a standard of excellence that inspires our entire team. I am deeply grateful for your leadership, vision, and steadfastness.

In the early years, the Chamber benefited from a dedicated group of volunteers, who after their day jobs, would come into the office at night, to check the answering machine for messages, type letters, and manually add business cards into the database. Some of those early volunteers have remained committed to the success of the AACCNJ and are still part of our adjunct staff and are here tonight to celebrate with you. Also here tonight are some of the foundational members, who contributed their time and expertise at no cost, and have remained invested over many years. The greatest lesson I learned through this journey with you is the importance of truly believing in what you are doing and understanding your purpose. You need both the vision and the ability to execute it, or to enlist others to help you execute the vision. Today, we are blessed to have a staff of 18, composed of senior leadership and invaluable team members who each contribute daily to our collective success. We each understand that ultimately, demonstrable accomplishments is what garners more support for your vision. Indeed, “Nothing succeeds like success”.

Being an eyewitness to history and contributing to the success of the AACCNJ has been a life-changing and transformative experience, in more ways than I can enumerate, both personally and professionally. It is truly a blessing to do what I love and to make a difference in the lives of others. I want to express my sincere gratitude for the inspiration you provided. Your encouragement helped me utilize my unique gifts and skills. Combined with the efforts of a talented team of marketing professionals, we have developed a brand that stands out in the marketplace for its unparalleled excellence. We firmly believe that anything worth doing is worth doing well, and this principle guides our work. Through your mentorship, I learned to cultivate relationships that were instrumental in strengthening and sustaining the organization over the past fifteen plus years - people you can call who are always ready, willing, and able to help execute the AACCNJ’s mission, whether as a volunteer, a donor, a panelist, a speaker, or a sponsor for an event or program. They consistently say YES.

John, you are known by many terms of affection: Dad, Brother, Uncle, Cousin, Visionary, the General, Trenton’s Braintrust, Leader, O.G. (aka original, old-school), the man, the myth, and the legend, the CEO, Mr. President, and with four honorary degrees, Dr. Harmon. You are a family man, a man of faith, authenticity, integrity, influence, history, legacy, resilience, hope, excellence and power. You inspire many with your abiding faith, love of family, tireless work ethic, wealth of institutional knowledge, willingness to reach across the aisle, ability to speak truth to power, and deep commitment to the life and legacy of Black people in America and the diaspora. As 2 Peter 1:3 NKJV states, “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.”

We are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead, and confident that with your continued leadership, we will reach even greater heights, as the AACCNJ continues to set the industry standard, as an accredited Statewide Chamber with Distinction. Wishing you a year filled with good health, happiness, optimism, and continued success.

“Your right hand”

Jacqueline E. Baptiste

Executive Advisor to Founder, President & CEO, AACCNJ & Brand Ambassador



September 23, 2025

Dear John,

Happy 65th Birthday! What a joy it is to pause and celebrate you, not just for the years you've lived, but for the life you've poured into so many of us. You have built something extraordinary in New Jersey, and your nearly two decades of steadfast leadership of the African American Chamber of Commerce stand as a testament to what vision, resilience, and faith can create.

Your work has never been about titles or recognition; it has always been about people. You've opened doors, created seats at tables where none existed, and reminded us that we are not only worthy of opportunity, but capable of shaping industries, policies, and futures. Through your example, you have shown us that advocacy and enterprise can walk hand in hand, and that when they do, entire communities rise.

Now, as we launch into New York, your legacy stretches even further. What began in New Jersey is blossoming into something greater, a movement that will empower generations of Black business owners and leaders to come. The seeds you planted are bearing fruit across state lines, and I feel blessed to walk this journey with you.

On a personal note, I am so grateful to call you a friend and a mentor. You've taught me to dream without limits, to lead with integrity, and to measure success not by what we acquire, but by what we leave behind.

John, 65 looks good on you, not just because of what you have done, but because of all that still lies ahead. The next chapters will be even richer, even more impactful, and even more inspiring. May this birthday be a reminder of how deeply you are loved, respected, and admired.

With heartfelt gratitude and endless aspiration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tanya".

Tanya Freeman, Esq.
Chair, Steering Committee
New York State Black Business Alliance (NYSBBA)



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
P.O. BOX 001
TRENTON
08625
(609) 292-6000

PHILIP D. MURPHY
GOVERNOR

TAHESHA L. WAY
LT. GOVERNOR

September 23, 2025

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome everyone in attendance to celebrate the 15th Annual Business Leadership Conference of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ).

This year's conference, "Collaborating for our collective success," consists of panel discussions with industry experts on critical issues facing the business community in New Jersey. It is indeed noteworthy that the AACCNJ strives to economically empower and sustain African American communities and businesses through entrepreneurship and initiatives. As Governor and Lieutenant Governor, we are inspired by the AACCNJ mission and proudly recognize the essential role you play in the Garden State's economy.

We would also like to take this time to acknowledge the 65th birthday and milestone celebration for Founder, President & CEO John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM. Birthdays are an occasion to look back upon all the joys and blessings that have made our lives special. It is with such great pleasure that we join your family and friends in wishing you the very best on your special day.

John, thank you for your leadership over the years as the AACCNJ continues to stand alongside African American businesses making New Jersey a place where all businesses can thrive. Best wishes for a successful and memorable event.

Our very best,

A blue ink signature of Philip D. Murphy, written in a cursive style.

Philip D. Murphy
Governor

A blue ink signature of Tahesha L. Way, written in a cursive style.

Tahesha L. Way
Lieutenant Governor



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Suzanne P. Clark
President and
Chief Executive Officer

September 4, 2025

Dr. John E. Harmon, Sr. IOM
Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer
African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey
379 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 8618

Dear John,

Congratulations and warm wishes to you on your 65th birthday. This milestone is a moment to reflect on your many achievements and the lasting impact of your leadership.

As President and CEO of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, you've been a tireless advocate for economic growth and opportunity. Your work has opened doors for countless individuals and businesses, and your voice continues to shape policy and progress across New Jersey and beyond.

Your dedication, integrity, and commitment to service are deeply respected – and deeply appreciated by the U.S. Chamber with the time you've devoted to our Board of Directors and the Chamber Committee of 100. Thank you for your leadership and for setting a powerful example of what it means to lead with purpose.

Wishing you continued health, happiness, and success in the years ahead.

Sincerely,



African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY
EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

2 MILESTONE TIME CAPSULE

THE EARLY YEARS

As a young man, John E. Harmon, Sr. spent much of his time at Mercer County Community College (MCCC), a popular place to socialize, play basketball, and shoot pool. His path changed when three women who worked at the college noticed him and urged him to enroll, even guiding him through the application process. At that point, Harmon was working as a mechanic, and while his parents and six siblings had never earned college degrees, he became the first in his family to pursue higher education. His father, a truck driver who deeply valued his son's achievements despite not completing high school himself, proudly attended both his MCCC and Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) graduations.

After completing his studies at MCCC, Harmon transferred to FDU's Rutherford Campus to pursue a degree in business management. There, he embraced leadership roles as president of the Black Student Union and as a resident assistant. His time at FDU opened new doors, giving him the chance to grow academically, socially, and personally.

Looking back, Harmon reflects on this chapter as a turning point. As he put it, he was "a young Black man from Trenton finally realizing that a better life could be had with a college education." With encouragement, mentorship, and determination, he laid the groundwork for the successful career and community leadership that would follow.

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

John
HARMON
MAYOR

*Not a career politician,
not a government insider.
He gets things done!*

www.harmonfortrenton.com
609-477-5087

Paid for by Friends of John Harmon for Mayor



Harmon: The Early Years

1960

John E. Harmon Sr., was born to Vivian & Adair Harmon, on September 15, 1960, Trenton, NJ. The family lived in a rowhouse on Sanford Street, in a working-class neighborhood (the North Ward).

1969

John was one of seven children, Eddie, Kenny, Nate, Dwight, Paulette & Arlene. At the age of 9, John's mom signed him up for the Little League Team, he played until 1972.

1972

The family moved to a middle class neighborhood of West Trenton, into a three story semi detached six bedroom house. John continued to play baseball for the West End Little League 72- 75 (Babe Ruth League).

1975

John started high school - tenth grade, Trenton Central High School - Vocational School, he attended a exploratory program for all the trades. John enrolled in Auto Mechanics Program for the three years.

1978

John graduates from High School, in 1978. That year, he suffers the tragic loss of his beloved mother, Vivian at the age of 17. John's mother was 53 years young.



TO VOLUNTEER OR CONTRIBUTE, OR F

1979

John pursues his love of mechanics, working with Haldeman Ford and Firestone. He later enrolled at MCCC in 1979. He graduated from MCCC in 1981, and graduated Fairleigh Dickinson University in 1983.

John began his banking career at Chemical Bank. He later worked at the Bowery Savings Bank and United Bank of Philadelphia. (1983 - 1993)

1986

John marries Lennice Harmon in 1986. John and Lennice had three sons together, John Jr. (1983), Joshua (1988) and Justin (1989).

1987

John purchased his first home in 1984 in Trenton, NJ. The family purchased their second home in Ewing in 1987.

1989

John started Harmon Transfer, Trucking Company, in 1989. In 1992, John left his banking positions and focused full time on his trucking business. (1989 -2005).

1996

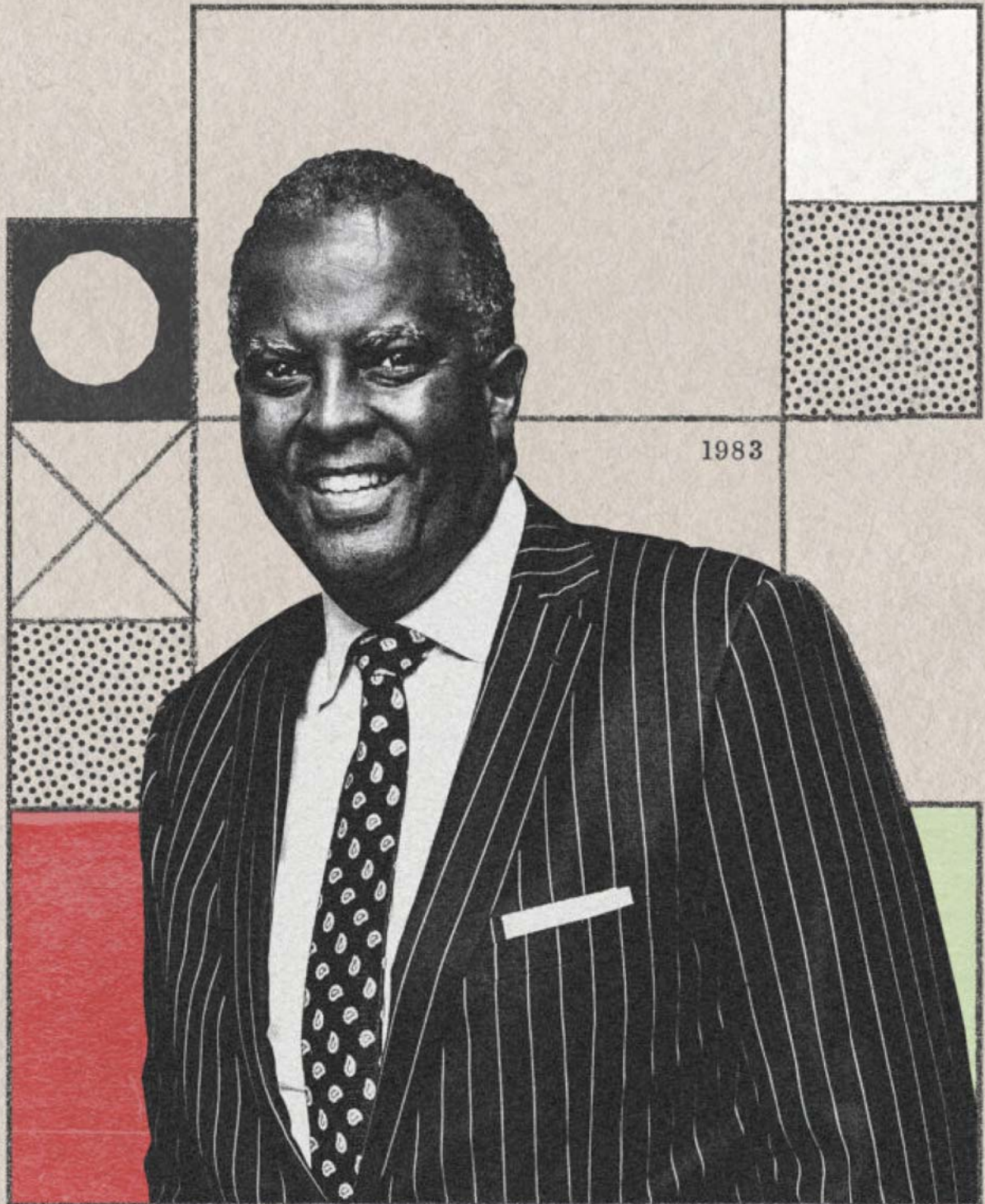
John's father, Adair, dies at the age of 63 in July of 1996. John's beloved sister Paulette dies from Cancer in August of 1996 at 37 years of age.

1997

John begins his affiliation with Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce (MTAACC).



**FAIRLEIGH
DICKINSON
UNIVERSITY**



(Illustration: Matthew Hancock)

FIRST GENERATION STORIES

**JOHN E. HARMON, SR., BS'83
(RUTH), BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

FDU MAGAZINE FALL 2022

As a young man, John E. Harmon, Sr., spent time on the campus of Mercer County Community College (MCCC) — a kind of social gathering spot and a great place to play basketball or shoot pool.

One day, three women who worked for the college challenged him. "They called me by name and said, 'John Harmon, you're here every day. Why don't you go to school? You should be in school here,'" he recalls. "They helped me with the paperwork, and I enrolled."

At the time, Harmon worked as a mechanic. His father was a truck driver and his mother, who had worked in a factory, had passed away. None of his six siblings had completed a college degree. "My father didn't go to college or finish high school, but he really appreciated my accomplishments. He came to my community college graduation and my FDU graduation." Harmon attended FDU's Rutherford Campus after MCCC and studied business management. He was president of the Black Student Union and a resident assistant.

"I was a young Black man from Trenton finally realizing that a better life could be had with a college education," he says. Through grants and the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF), Harmon found both the financial and personal support he needed to succeed in college. And career services connected Harmon with the Bowers Savings Bank for a management-training program, putting him on track to flourish in the business world. He was the only Black man selected for the program.

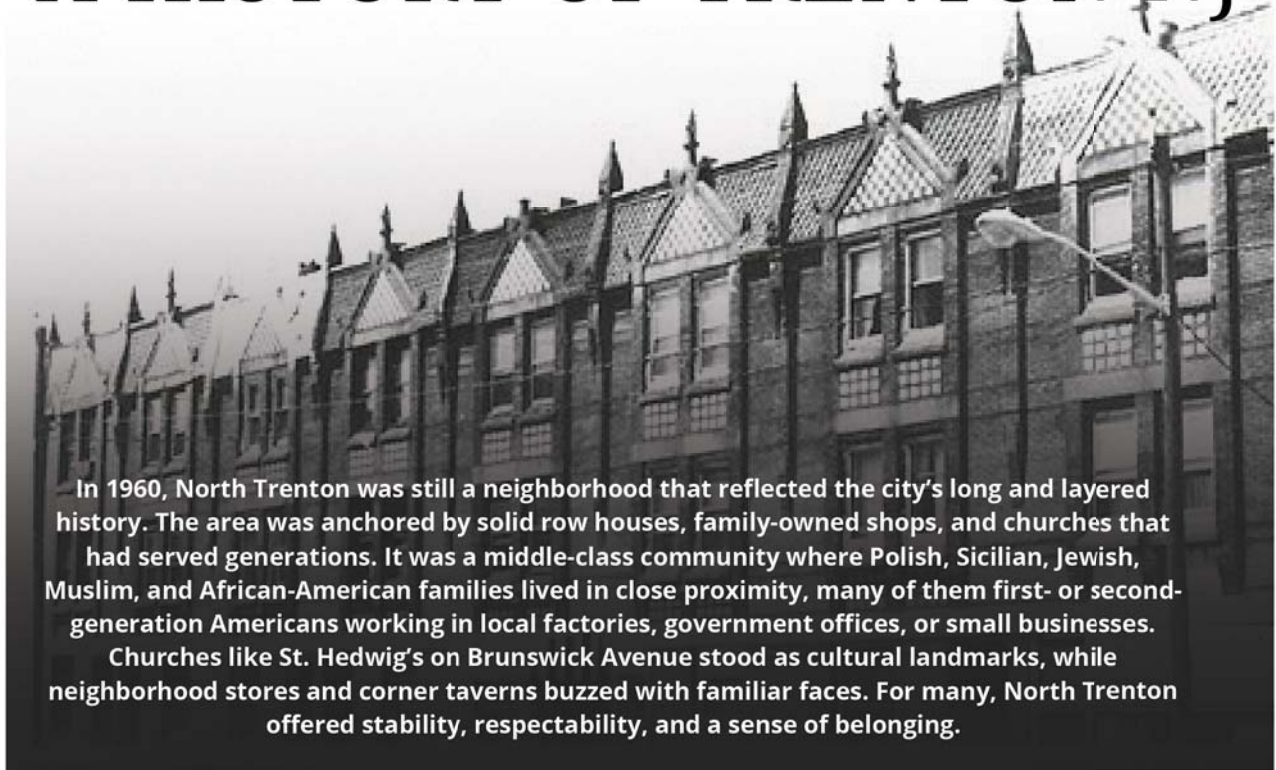
"I got a chance at a young age to work with some very smart people who allowed me to evolve, to learn from my mistakes, and they didn't chastise me, but rather encouraged me," says Harmon. He left the banking industry after a decade to start his own trucking business, Harmon Transfer Corp., which he ran for 16 years.

"Fairleigh Dickinson University was an integral part of my success," Harmon says. "College opened up pathways and taught me to engage in conversation in a substantive way." He's also proud to say that all three of his sons have attended college. In 1997, he became involved with the Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce (MTAACC) and then in 2007, he founded the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ). He has served as president and CEO ever since.

His mission at the AACCNJ is to pay it forward and to create more equitable opportunities for Black-owned businesses and Black entrepreneurs.

"It's about being impactful in someone else's life the way that others were impactful in mine." At Commencement 2022, in May, Harmon received an honorary degree from FDU, and delivered the graduation address. He said, "FDU has prepared you to confront tomorrow's challenges head-on and to unearth future opportunities, therefore, take full advantage of this mutual investment in your future by making us all proud that we had this time together today." Later in June, Harmon became a member of FDU's Board of Trustees.

A HISTORY OF TRENTON NJ



Yet even as the streets carried this air of rootedness, the seeds of change were being planted. Across the country, suburbanization was drawing families out of cities, and Trenton was no exception. Middle-class families, both white and Black, began to leave for new housing developments outside the city limits. Real estate agents played a role, stoking fears about changing racial demographics in order to encourage rapid turnover in certain blocks. Meanwhile, the city itself was reshaping the landscape through urban renewal projects, building highways and large government complexes that disrupted old patterns of neighborhood life. The effects were subtle at first, but the signs of dislocation and disinvestment were there.





EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

As the decade unfolded, North Trenton became a place where demographic shifts were visible on every street. More Black families, many newly arrived from the South, moved into the neighborhood, building their own professional and working-class presence. At the same time, some of the older white immigrant groups and religious communities began moving away. Commercial corridors that had once thrived slowly thinned out, as small shops struggled against both suburban shopping centers and the shrinking customer base left in the city. For longtime residents, there was a growing awareness that the neighborhood's rhythm was changing, even if daily life still held its old patterns of school, church, and corner-store errands.

The breaking point came with the riots of 1968, following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Trenton erupted in unrest, and North Trenton—particularly around the Battle Monument—felt the impact. Businesses were damaged or closed, and many never reopened. For residents, the riots marked a symbolic and material shift, accelerating the departure of families and deepening the challenges that urban renewal and disinvestment had already begun. What had been, in 1960, a neighborhood of stability and pride was by the decade's end a community grappling with loss, uncertainty, and the heavy imprint of broader social forces that reshaped cities across America.

TRENTON IS OUR HISTORY



 **African American**
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY
EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY



**3 65 & STILL
STRIVING**



JOHN E. HARMON SR., IOM
FOUNDER, PRESIDENT, CEO, AACCNJ

In 1997, as a small businessperson, John E. Harmon, Sr. was an early member of the Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce (MTAACC), becoming its president, two years later. Under his guidance, MTAACC grew its membership, forged alliances with business associations/organizations and government, and forged strategic partnerships in the public and private sectors to benefit African American businesses throughout New Jersey. Harmon recognized the growing need for a statewide organization that could align both government and business interests to advocate for New Jersey's Black entrepreneurs and their communities. That led him to establish the AACCNJ – which is heralded as the leading voice for business development and economic empowerment for New Jersey's Black owned businesses.

Harmon has served as the Founder, President, and CEO of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ), since 2007. In this role he has the responsibility of establishing, implementing, and executing the mission, as well as the fiduciary oversight and governance of AACCNJ in accordance with its Bylaws. In addition, he works to identify strategic partnerships in both the public and private sector to connect AACCNJ members and supporters to resources and opportunities to grow and sustain their goals and objectives. Moreover, Harmon serves as an advocate on behalf of the 1.2 million African American residents and the over 88,000 Black owned businesses statewide to ensure that policy at the municipal, county, and federal level provides fairness, equity and access to a level playing field in the marketplace. Harmon hosts the Gold Telly Award winning - AACCNJ monthly television show "Pathway to Success" as well as the Chamber's weekly radio show "The Empowerment Hour."

Prior to his twenty-seven-year career as a chamber executive, Mr. Harmon was previously employed at The Bowery Savings Bank (now part of Capital One Bank) in New York City where he managed the bank's Residential Real Estate Department overlooking major mortgage loan transactions; and at Chemical Bank where he managed third party loan originations for New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. While working at Chemical Bank, Mr. Harmon established The Affordable Housing Loan Program. Following his banking career, Mr. Harmon founded a transportation company in 1989, called Harmon Transfer, Corp. The company transported dry goods, perishable commodities, and produce throughout the Northeast United States and Canada.

Harmon is the Former Chairman of the Board for the National Black Chamber of Commerce; there are 150 Affiliate Chapters of the NBCC and over fifteen international affiliates. Harmon is a member of the US Chamber of Commerce – Board of Directors, the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia's Economic Community Advisory Council (ECAC), Hackensack Meridian Health Board of Directors, Jersey Central Power & Light and Hermann Transportation. Harmon is also a Board Member of Digital Place Based Advertising Association and is a member of the US Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100. He is the Founder CEO & Chairman of the New York State Black Business Alliance, Inc. (NYSBBA), and was pinned as a new member of the 100 Black Men of NY in January of 2025. Additionally, Mr. Harmon is a Board member of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce (NJCC), New Jersey BPU, Supplier Diversity Development Council (SDDC), Opportunity New Jersey, Better Choices, Better Care NJ, Chairman of Crime Stoppers of Greater Trenton. He is a former Board Member of Fairleigh Dickinson University, Investors Bank, American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE), First Book, and Minding Our Business (MOB), a youth entrepreneurial initiative in affiliation with Rider University.

Harmon was awarded in 2024 with the National Association of Corporate Directors Awards – non-profit governance award. NJ Biz Power 100 List for 2024, 2023, 2022 and in 2018 to its Power 10 list. Harmon was acknowledged in 2021 and 2022 by ROI-NJ, for two consecutive years as the Number 1 Person of Color in NJ and was recognized in ROI-NJ “People of Color Influencers” for 2023 and 2018.

Harmon was recognized as one of the NJ Business Hall of Fame Class of 2021 Laureates on December 9th, 2021. In 2021, for the third consecutive year, Harmon was acknowledged in South Jersey Journal’s list of the “Twenty-five Most Influential African Americans in New Jersey. Harmon was honored by NJBIA as the Executive of the Year in October of 2022, and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra at their Spring Gala in May of 2022. Harmon is also recognized as a Center of Influence (COI) for the

United States Army and was selected as a participant in the Joint Civilian Orientation 2018 Conference (JCOC) hosted by the Secretary of Defense. The JCOC program is the oldest and most prestigious public liaison program in the Department of Defense. Harmon was selected as one of 40 individuals (out of 230 applicants) to attend JCOC 18. In addition, Harmon was the only attendee from the State of New Jersey to participate in the conference. Harmon was the first individual selected as a member of the host committee for NFL Super Bowl XLVII held in NJ in 2014.

John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM, ABA, BA, ABA, h.c., BS, L.H.D. h.c. holds an associate degree in Business Administration from Mercer County Community College and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Management, Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1983. Shortly before graduating in 1983, Harmon received a call from FDU’s career development office encouraging him to apply for a management training program for future bank presidents. Of 150 candidates, he was one of only 12 chosen – and the only African American. Mr. Harmon also successfully completed a one-year Fellowship on Regionalism and Sustainability sponsored by The Ford Foundation and completed the Minority Business Management Seminar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in 2009. Additionally, Mr. Harmon completed a four-year Chamber Executive Management Program, at Villanova University, sponsored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in 2014. Harmon was conferred with an honorary Associates Degree in Business Administration from Rowan College Burlington County, in 2014. Harmon was awarded a honorary Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.), honoris causa, from Fairleigh Dickinson University in May of 2022.

Harmon was bestowed with an honorary degree of Doctor of Business Administration from Georgian Court University, Lakewood, NJ in May of 2024. Dr. Harmon, gave the undergraduate commencement address to the class of 2025, and was bestowed with an honorary doctor of humane letters degree, from William Paterson University at the Prudential Center, in Newark, NJ, in May of 2025.

Harmon grew up in a large, working-class family in Trenton, NJ. His father operated his own trucking business; his mother was a factory worker. In high school, Harmon studied auto mechanics and aspired to one day running his own business like his father. Harmon is an avid sports fan, as a young man he played on the local baseball team. Today he enjoys golfing. He has three sons, John Jr., Joshua, and Justin. He is a member of Higher Ground Interdenominational Church, in Ewing, NJ. Harmon released a book in 2025 - Power Moves: The Life and Legacy of a Black Chamber Executive.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW JOHN E. HARMON, SR.?

CHILDHOOD & PAST

- what did John want to be when he grew up?
- Who was John's best friend as a child?
- What was John's favorite subject in school, or favorite teacher?
- What was a funny thing John did as a child or teen that got them into trouble?
- What was John's favorite toy as a kid?

FAVORITES & PREFERENCES

- What is John's favorite book, movie, or song?
- What is John's favorite sport?
- What is John's favorite sports team?
- What is John's favorite place in their home?
- If John could only eat one food for the rest of their life, what would it be?
- What is John's favorite vacation spot or dream destination?
- What is one hobby or talent of John's that people might not know about?

FUTURE & DREAMS

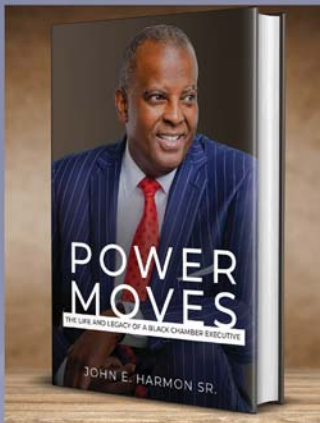
- If John could choose any place to visit, where would it be?
- If John could spend a day doing anything, what would it be?
- What is one thing John would like to learn to do?
- What is one piece of advice John would give to his younger self?

DID YOU KNOW?

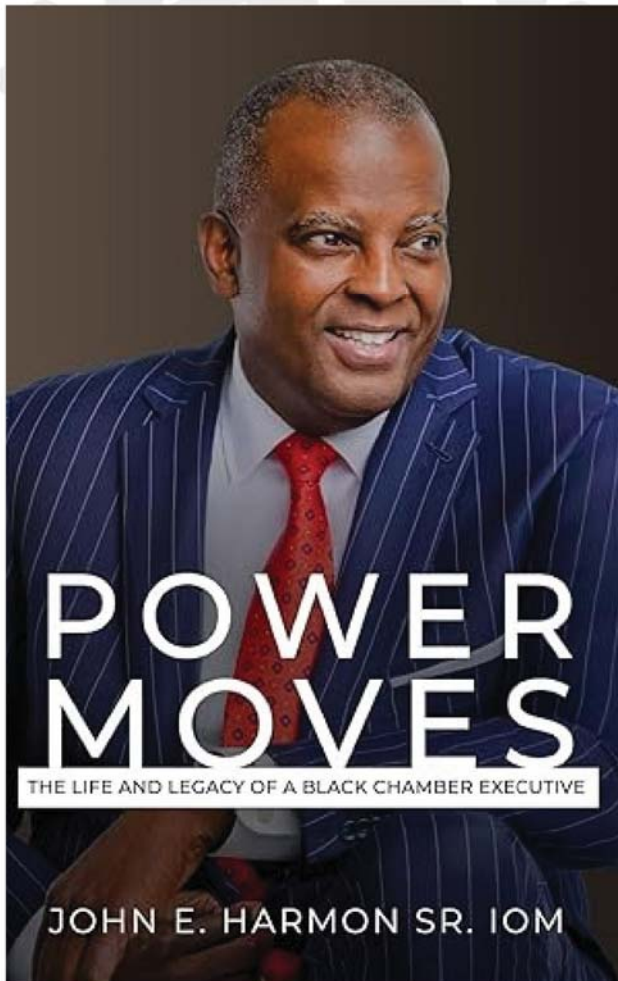
POWER MOVES

The Life And Legacy Of A
Black Chamber Executive

AVAILABLE NOW!



John E. Harmon Sr. recounts his ascension journey
from humble beginnings to becoming one of the
state's most influential businessmen.



POWER MOVES NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

ABOUT THIS BOOK

New Jersey native John E. Harmon Sr. has never been a stranger to hard work. At just 11 years old, he got his first job selling produce out of the back of his family's truck. While most kids would probably recoil at the thought of work, a young John was excited by it. He got a thrill out of discovering new ways to use the money he earned from one job to leverage it into his next opportunity. Entrepreneurship was in his bones. But like most entrepreneurs, his journey towards success was rocky, though it would deem itself worthy, in the end. After becoming the first person in his family to graduate from college, John set his sights on a safe career in the world of banking. However, after a short few years, his plan was knocked off course when the bank he worked for was sold.

Though he didn't immediately recognize it, the disturbance was a blessing in disguise. He found himself gravitating back toward a career that allowed him to be the captain of his own destiny. Now back within the world of entrepreneurship, his first endeavor would be a trucking company he founded with his older brother. While he displayed a natural propensity for the work he did, he quickly realized that being a Black business owner was no easy feat. He recognized the limited systems of support that existed for those that looked like him, which often left no one to turn to when the roads got rough. Instead of accepting this reality as his fate, he set out to level the playing field by building an ecosystem for Black businesses to thrive. In *Power Moves*, John recounts his journey of ascension, from humble beginnings as the fifth of seven children in a working class family in Trenton, New Jersey, to becoming one of the state's most influential businessmen.

With unflinching honesty, he tells the tale of the man behind the prestigious titles, awards, and revered accolades. Offering up lessons and experiences that define his inspirational journey, he recounts life-altering moments from his chaotic childhood, the challenges and joys of fatherhood, and, of course, the moment he accidentally stumbled upon his purpose. His candid account of navigating corporate America as a Black man, details the many difficulties he encountered while building several Black Chambers of Commerce within his home state, and those nearby.

As a devout husband, father, brother, CEO, founder, and chairman, *Power Moves* is the dynamic story of a man who conquered copious roles in stride. Through examples pulled straight from his awe-inspiring story, he shows us how to succeed in one aspect of life while simultaneously failing in another. His rousing story is one about learning to see a door slammed as an opportunity to find an open window nearby, to be resilient in the face of adversity, and to be strategic when confronted with unexpected obstacles. John's story forces readers to reimagine their definition of success, and to consider a life lived more purposefully. Copyedited 10.08.23 Why is this book relevant: According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 Annual Business Survey, there are approximately 3.12 million Black-owned businesses across the country. However, data shows that despite an uptick in the number of Black folks entering the realm of entrepreneurship, they're still facing significantly more challenges than their non-Black counterparts.

An Intuit QuickBooks survey found that 57% of Black business owners were denied bank loans when starting their companies, versus a mere 37% of non-Black business owners. Additionally, Bank of America's 2022 Women and Minority Business Owner Spotlight found that 46% of respondents had trouble accessing capital. These are struggles that John knows all too well. As seen through his own lived experiences, John understands the challenges and rewards that come with running your own business, and from trying to build something from nothing. His story explores a wide range of themes that even non-entrepreneurs will relate to. As he navigates childhood trauma, love and parenthood, economics, racial inequities, and the challenges of entrepreneurship and leadership, readers are encouraged to see themselves in him.

JOHN E. HARMON'S FUTURE & DREAMS

Seventeen years ago, I had a vision to establish an organization that would work in partnership with the Governor, and his administration, corporate executives, and stakeholders across New Jersey to position black residents and black businesses for equitable participation in every sector of New Jersey's economy. The engagement of these critical partners has not changed. However, the widening disparities in access to opportunities within the public and private sector for blacks versus others must be addressed. Blacks remain at the bottom in a variety of areas, Economic opportunities, Employment, Homeownership, Net Worth, Health and decision-making roles in government and business. The level of acknowledgement and inaction is insulting. The call for statewide accountability is apparent.

Through our meetings with the Murphy Administration and elected officials we have shared best practices of public procurement policies from around the country as well as systems and processes that could improve the social and economic standing of the 1.2 million blacks and over 124,000 black owned businesses, and for others, if these proposed recommendations are adopted and implemented.

Once you have been informed it is time to respond. Black voters in New Jersey ushered Governor Murphy to victory in his first and second terms by providing 94 and 96 percent respectively of their vote. Additionally, black people as a voting block in New Jersey vote overwhelmingly for democrats at a rate of approximately above ninety percent.

Based on the level of investment of black people via their vote for democratic candidates, why are we still appealing for intentional effort to mitigate the underperformance of blacks in New Jersey's economy? The establishment of reciprocity benchmarks with equity is what the AACCNJ is advocating for.

The recent results of the 2024 presidential race between Vice President Harris and Former President Trump revealed that Former President Trump lost by only 4 percentage points in New Jersey, a state, where registered democratic voters are approximately 900,000 more than registered republicans. These numbers indicated to me that more than blacks are feeling their relationship with the democratic party is not equitable or reciprocal. We will continue to pursue greater equity and reciprocity from our elected officials as well as corporations in New Jersey.

The execution of our mission has been steadfastly focused and the impact of the AACCNJ continues to reverberate throughout New Jersey. We continue to make progress, however there are several policy barriers that limit the equitable participation of Black residents and Black businesses.



THE VISION:

- Raising the exemption threshold on Project Labor Agreements in New Jersey from \$5 Million to \$35 Million so that the limits align with Federal Law.
- The abolishment of Registered Municipal Accountant designation as a requirement to perform municipal government audits.
- Elimination of Education, Occupation and Credit Scoring as proxies for auto insurance premiums.
- A review of New Jersey's State Contracting and Cooperative Purchasing Programs with the intention of modifying the process for more equitable participation and better transparency to the public.
- Implementation of MWBE public contracting goals which will include professional goods and services.
- Raise public contracting purchasing levels from \$17,000 to \$150,000 without requiring an RFP.
- Implementation of aspirational procurement goals on Public Contracts in New Jersey to align with New York.
- Disaggregation of the spending levels of blacks and other groups; applying all the aspirational goals once adopted to every dollar the state of New Jersey spends, Pension funds, bond finance, professional services, Construction, and Good and Services, etc.

The time is long overdue for our state legislators and the governor to engage us to make our state more equitable for lacks. We are encouraged by the progress that we have made with corporations and financial services institutions in 2025 while seeking to build upon our mutual success in 2026.

Ironically, opportunities in New Jersey have always been plentiful, however, the challenge continues to be equitable participation for blacks; something that must change for New Jersey to realize its fullest potential.

However, for us to be successful in 2025 and beyond, we will need complete engagement from a variety of stakeholders. We ask that you give us an opportunity to serve and support your business.

 African American
MUSEUM OF NEW JERSEY

EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY



4 JOHN HARMON THE LEGACY

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF NEW JERSEY
OUR TIMELINE THE CONTINUANCE OF A LEGACY

NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE EXECUTE COMMITTEE, PUBLIC DOMAIN IMAGE, COURTESY US LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) Inc. was established in 2007 by its Founder, President, and CEO John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM. Serving more than 800 active members, the AACCNJ has become a central beacon for minority and non-minority advocacy building, community and government relations, business development, job retention, and education attainment. The Chamber serves as a mechanism for communication, program creation, and strategic implementation of initiatives and acts as a continuance of the legacy of Black Wall Street, progressing in the fight for social and economic equality, equity and opportunity.

1900

The National Negro
Business League



1960

Civil Rights Movement,
Fight for Social
Economic Justice



2007

Inception of the
African American
Chamber of Commerce
of New Jersey



1906

Foundation of
Tulsa, Ok,
Black Wall Street



1997

Metropolitan Trenton
African American
Chamber of Commerce



2023

Inception of the New
York State Black
Business Alliance



**METROPOLITAN TRENTON
AFRICAN AMERICAN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

ABOUT THE METROPOLITAN TRENTON AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

John E. Harmon, Sr. IOM, is the former President and CEO of the Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce (MTAACC).

Inspired by Harry Alford, and Kay Debow Alford, founders of the National Black Chamber of Commerce, and Booker T. Washington, Harmon sought to bring organization, and guidance to his community.

Under his guidance, MTAACC grew its membership substantially, forged alliances with business associations/organizations and government, and forged strategic partnerships in the public and private sectors to benefit African American businesses throughout New Jersey

The Metropolitan Trenton African American Chamber of Commerce was a local organization of businesses and companies in Trenton with the intention to develop and further the interests of local companies and businesses in United States.

Chambers of Commerce main activities were safeguarding business interests and sharing business experiences and business interests, contact with governments, civil society, local media and the press and organizing trade shows and events.



 **African American**
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY
EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

Conference on G20 India
Agenda for Business 20 on Diversity & Inclus

h National Black Chamber of Commerce, U

March 2023 at The Apollo, New D

NBCC | National Black
Chamber of Commerce®

NATIONAL BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDED 1993

The National Black Chamber of Commerce was established in 1993, based on the previously executed vision of Booker T. Washington's National Negro Business League. The National Black Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-sectarian organization dedicated to the economic empowerment of Black Communities. The NBCC acts as an advocate for the community, looking to bridge the gap of historical exclusion of Black Americans women, and other ethnic/racial minorities.

When Kay DeBow Alford and her husband Harry left Indianapolis, Indiana and moved to Washington, D.C. in September 1994, they had already founded the National Black Chamber of Commerce on May 23, 1993. They had begun locally to fill the void of a Black business organization by founding the Hoosier Minority Chamber of Commerce in Indianapolis which evolved into the NBCC.

The NBCC was crafted from the empowerment principles of Booker T. Washington, the business acumen of Congressman Parren Mitchell, and enforced by the father of affirmative Action Arthur Fletcher. Kay and Harry Alford took the business mission to new heights. The organization, comprised of chapters throughout the United States expanded its reach internationally to France, Mexico, England, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Kenya, and Ghana.

KAY DEBOW ALFORD
CO-FOUNDER OF THE
NBCC



HARRY C. ALFORD
PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER
NBCC





EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

INCEPTION OF THE AFRICAN
AMERICAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE OF NEW JERSEY

A REFLECTION FROM JOHN E. HARMON SR., IOM

"Let me start by saying thank you. As I reflect over the last ten years, I can recall the countless number of people who attempted to sway me from moving forward on the formation of the AACCNJ with their broken promises and lack of follow through. However, given the systemic challenges of high poverty, unemployment, limited skills development, and low capacity for the 1.2 million African American residents and over 66,000 businesses in New Jersey, there was a void that some group had to fulfill if New Jersey was to get on a path to improve its level of competitiveness.

In my opinion, the African American community and New Jersey's mainstream, where all of the resources, opportunities, and information are prevalent, were traveling on separate axes. Unless there is an intersection, the probability of fostering relations are minimal, thus creating the void which AACCNJ chose to bridge through its mission. Since then, we have been able to advance public policy through engagement of both republicans and democrats, while accomplishing similar goals with various chambers and business associates.

Moreover, our most rewarding advocacy has been our ability to engage traditional African American community organizations and faith-based leaders around the table talking candidly about the state of the African American community.

Although we pause to celebrate this historical milestone, there remains plenty of work to be done. We are encouraged to see the recent set aside procurement ordinances in Essex and Hudson counties and a coalescence of African American groups on a platform of economic and social justice issues, which, if implemented, would improve conditions for African Americans in New Jersey while strengthening our state. I am proud to lead an organization whose success of its mission has favorable implications for New Jersey. Lastly, I owe a debt of gratitude to the staff, board members, and to those who invested their time and treasure to help build the AACCNJ of today. Nelson Mandela said, "It always seems impossible, until it is done."

**JUNE, 2017
AACCNJ 10TH
ANNIVERSARY**



The 2025 Juneteenth Black Business Expo

JOHN HARMON

THE JOURNEY

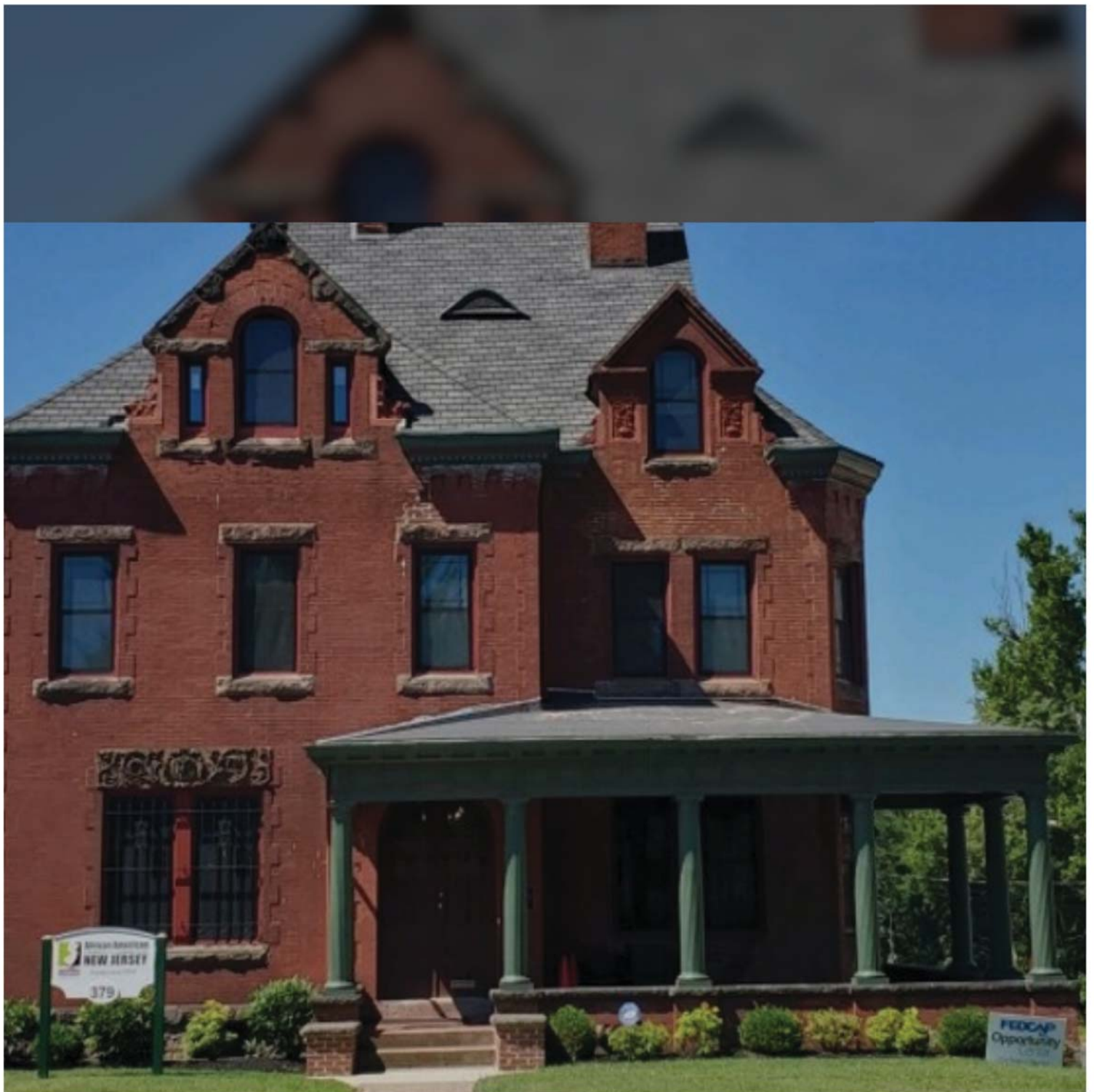
Harmon has served as the Founder, President and CEO of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ), since 2007. In this role he has the responsibility of establishing, implementing, and executing the mission, as well as the fiduciary oversight and governance of AACCNJ in accordance with its Bylaws.

In addition, he works to identify strategic partnerships in both the public and private sector to connect AACCNJ members and supporters to resources and opportunities to grow and sustain their goals and objectives. Harmon serves as an advocate on behalf of the 1.2 million African American residents and the over 80,000 black owned NJ businesses to ensure that policy at the municipal, county, and federal level provides fairness, equity and access to a level playing field in the marketplace. Prior to his 20-year career as a chamber executive, Harmon was employed at The Bowery Savings Bank in NYC, managing the bank's Residential Real Estate Dept.; and at Chemical Bank managing third party loan originations. Harmon founded a transportation company in 1989, called Harmon Transfer, Corp.

"I got involved with a group of people in Trenton, Looking to establish and organization, to help black businesses. I was one of the founding members, there were 21 of us. Then I had the vision to create a statewide organization, because I realized, as being the president of this regional organization, that we did not have direct communication and connection to government or corporations at the highest level. In order to impact the black business community in a significant way, you had to have real credible strategic relationships, wherein we could leverage resources opportunities and information. that was the impetus for the creation of the AACCNJ".

*John E. Harmon Sr., IOM
on his inspiration for the Chamber*





African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY

EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON THE JOURNEY

November 23, 2022, The United States Chamber of Commerce awarded the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey with its Accredited State Chamber with Distinction designation for its sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the community.



"Chambers of commerce that achieve an Accreditation designation are truly leaders in their industry." said Raymond P. Towle, U.S. Chamber Vice President, Federation Relations and IOM. "This rigorous review includes all aspects of a chamber's policies, operations, and programming. When chambers of commerce earn the distinction of becoming Accredited, it is a mark of excellence for the organization, its staff, and its leadership. Accredited chambers are recognized for their ability to serve as a resource to their region's businesses while maintaining transparent governance practices, sound financial controls, safe work environments, effective communications, and value in programming. They are commended for their continued advocacy of free enterprise, and for their commitment to serving members and their local businesses. Congratulations on this tremendous accomplishment."

The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey

performs an essential role in New Jersey's Economy. As affirmed in its mission statement, the Chamber seeks to economically empower and sustain African American communities, facilitating entrepreneurship and free enterprise activity within the state, with direct outreach programs. Different from acting as simply an association of allied businesses, the Chamber serves as a proactive advocacy group with a 501(c)3 tax exemption, shared by the National Black Chamber of Commerce.

EST. JUNE 2007



ABOUT THE AACCNJ



Accredited State Chamber
of Commerce with Distinction
U.S. Chamber of Commerce



THE TRANSFORMATION CENTER





August 18, 2025

Jeffrey Sussman, Manager
Seven One Plus, LLC by Nexus Holdings LLC
1333 Brunswick Avenue
Suite 200
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Dear Mr. Sussman,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff, and Members of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ), we want to express our deep appreciation for your generous gift of the property at 165 and 173 West Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ. This property will be designated as The Transformation Center.

The AACCNJ is dedicated to sustaining Black businesses and the communities where they are domiciled. On behalf of the 1.2 million Black New Jerseyans and 124,000 Black-owned businesses, your trust in us allows us to continue supporting underserved communities in New Jersey, particularly in the city of Trenton and Mercer County.

We understand that when we set out with a vision, it can sometimes be difficult for others to grasp the trajectory and how we will accomplish our goals. It begins with a belief in the mission and purpose, and with the support of others, we can actualize that vision. Because of your support, we will continue to serve as a valuable resource and mechanism to enable others to realize their goals, dreams, and aspirations.

The Transformation Center will serve as a hub and incubator for entrepreneurs, as well as a training facility for the community.

Thank you again for your generosity. Please note this letter is an acknowledgment of your gift.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John E. Harmon, Sr.".

John E. Harmon, Sr. : IOM
Founder, President, and CEO

IN 2022, THE AACCNJ RECEIVED A PERFECT SCORE IN COMMUNICATIONS & FACILITIES MANAGEMENT FROM THE USCC.

In March of 2019, The United States Chamber of Commerce awarded the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) with three stars Accreditation for its sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the community. The Chamber joins the top 3 percent of all chambers in the nation who are Accredited as both the only accredited Chamber in New Jersey and the only African American Chamber in the US Chamber of Commerce federation to hold this distinction. With approximately 7,000 chambers in the U.S., Accreditation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a prestigious honor that distinguishes the high quality, expertise, and strong leadership displayed by Accredited state and local chambers of commerce.

On September 13th, 2024 the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) led a delegation of our members to Washington, DC for an impactful Reception/Forum hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Executive Leadership Council, and the Congressional Black Caucus.

"We are extremely delighted to share with our members and supporters the recent designation awarded by the United States Chamber of Commerce to the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, of its reaccreditation status "State Chamber with Distinction", said John E. Harmon, Sr., Founder, President & CEO. "The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey is the only Accredited Chamber of Commerce or Business organization in our state - what a significant achievement for the dedicated staff of professionals and Board of Directors."



ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) Inc. was established in 2007 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, B2B (business-to-business) organization in Trenton, New Jersey. The Founder, President and CEO of the AACCNJ is: John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM., jharmon@aaccnj.com Telephone (609) 571-1620

Serving more than 900 active members, the AACCNJ has become a central beacon for minority and non-minority advocacy building, community and government relations, business development, job retention, and education attainment. The Chamber serves as a mechanism for communication, program creation, and strategic implementation of initiatives and resolutions that help build New Jersey's economic landscape.

To date, the AACCNJ has advocated on behalf of its members on several capital development and procurement projects to insure inclusion. The AACCNJ is a conduit to:



Bridging gaps between the **under-performing populations** in New Jersey and a vital resource to initiating dialogue leading to strategies that address the state's overall competitiveness.



Workforce and development training, job-readiness programs and recruitment services.



Free enterprise activity for **Women, Veteran and Minority-owned business**.



Access to resources in making statewide businesses visible in key markets.



An open line of communication with state and local government officials, and suppliers.



Youth mentorship and entrepreneurial programs.

AACCNJ LOCATIONS

Berkeley College, 536 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07102

379 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey, 08618
(Headquarters)

Columbia Bank, 905 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07102

Mill One, 1 North Johnson Avenue
Hamilton, NJ 08609

Carnegie Center Building
35 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS



EST. JUNE 2007

1

The New Jersey Disparity Study results, released January 2024, revealed that Black-owned businesses received **1%** or less of state contracts in all industries between fiscal years **2015-2020**. For construction, Black-owned businesses received approximately **\$3.3 million** compared to White-male-owned businesses **\$10.8 billion**. Further, Black-owned businesses received **\$13.7 million** for professional services, compared to White-male-owned businesses **\$3.4 billion**. In response, AACCNJ formed the Disparity Study Task Force Committee to identify real solutions for the Murphy Administration to put in place to address the inequalities in business opportunity and prosperity in the state of New Jersey.

2



The AACCNJ earned two Bronze Awards in 2024,
Winning Show EP 411 "2023 Expo Special" 11/4/2024



3

The AACCNJ implemented and continued the expansion of several programs and initiatives with the state of NJ.

- Department of Corrections – Returning Citizens
- Department of Labor – Transformation Project
- Small Business Bonding Programs
- Inaugural Youth Leadership Summit brought together more than 200 students from high schools across NJ to empower and inspire the next generation of leaders. Mayor Ras Baraka delivered the keynote address.
- Renewal and expansion of Pathways to Recovery from Mercer County only to Central Region – Oct. 2024
- New program- SNAP Navigator (Mercer County)- Oct. 24

4

We led a contingency of our President Club Members to a "Free Enterprise, Renewing Growth & Expanding Opportunity" Showcase in Washington DC, in collaboration with the USCC, ELC and Congressional Black Caucus.

5

AACCNJ engaged Gibbons P.C. to serve as its Government and Regulatory Affairs counsel. Gibbons will counsel the AACCNJ in advocating on behalf of our members; the objective is to represent the AACCNJ on legislative, regulatory, and/or governmental processes affecting Black communities and Black-owned businesses in New Jersey.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

John Harmon installed as a member - One Hundred Black Men of New York, Jan. 2025
John Harmon, release autobiography "Power Moves", January, 2025
Gary Mann confirmed as Chairman of the Board of Directors, AACCNJ
Tammeisha Smith confirmed as Vice Chair of the Board of Directors
Tanya Freeman confirmed as Chair of the New York State Black Business Alliance

STAFF RECOGNITION

Jacqueline Baptiste, ROI NJ Influencers - People of Color 2024
Jacqueline Baptiste, ROI NJ Top Women in Business 2024
Carmen Gates, awarded Community Connector, Capital Area YMCA, February 2024
Carmen Gates, promoted to V.P. Community Development & External Affairs Officer, October 2024
Vivian Harmon, promoted to Executive Director, Training and Development Institute, October 2024
Mary Griffin received SDDC 2024, Distinguished Service Award, October 2024
Vivian Harmon - Graduate of Non-Profit Connect- Board-Connect Program, May 2024

ALL MEMBER BENEFITS

- Radio Show
- Membership Spotlight
- Monthly members only virtual call with the President
- Member Events Posted on Website - Free promotion of events, ribbon cuttings and services
- Complimentary Regional networking at AACCNJ events
- Dual membership with the US Chamber of Commerce
- Trade specific Roundtables
- Quarterly meetings
- Annual meeting
- Meeting With A Member of Membership Acquisition Team
- Assistance with MBE/MWBE/SBE/DBE Certifications
- Member Resume Portal
- Q&A opportunities with state and local officials and corporate representatives
- Pro Bono Alliance - Pro bono legal services *Annual revenues of \$500,000 or less.
- Ability to post jobs
- Access to RFP opportunities
- Opportunity for referrals and resources for potential opportunities
- Access to members only, promotions and discounts
- Complimentary website development
- Complimentary monthly ROI reports

MEMBERS LV2 - LV5 (\$2,500-\$7,500)

- Spotlight in Magazines
- Guest on RVN TV
- Priority Scheduling as a Quarterly meeting Presenter
- Priority Scheduling as panelist for AACCNJ events
- Standalone social media promos

MEMBERS LV6 - LV9 PLUS PRESIDENT'S CLUB (\$10K AND ABOVE)

- Pathway to Success TV appearance
- President club Roundtable Participation
- Unlimited promo shares on social media
- Company name and logo on AACCNJ website
- Recognition at the AACCNJ Annual meeting
- Supplier Chain Diversity
- High level networking and access to unique opportunities
- President club breakfast during BLC
- Support on Legislative and Public Policy matters

Member BENEFITS

EST. JUNE 2007



BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMITTEES & STAFF OVERVIEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS



Gary Mann
Chairman, AACCNJ Board of Directors,
President & CEO, Jasfel Analytics



John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM
Founder, President & CEO
AACCNJ



Tammeisha D. Smith
Vice Chair, AACCNJ
CEO, Dunbar Center, Inc.



Marcus Dyer, Esq.
Treasurer, AACCNJ Board of Directors
Associate, Withum Smith & Brown



Robert L. Johnson, Esq.
Secretary, AACCNJ Board of Directors
Director and Chief Diversity Officer, Gibbons Law

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr. Denise Anderson, Ph.D., MPH
CEO
Denise Anderson & Associates



Racheal Ankrah-Fosu
Chief Technology Advisor
The Galileo PreSchools
Busy Place Early Learning Center, KIDFIN



William Bowie
President & CEO
Empower Construction



Faye Coleman
CEO
PG Health, LLC



Deborah J. Frazier
Wealth Management Advisor
LRG Wealth, Advisors/Hightower



Hosea Johnson
*Emeritus Board Member
President & CEO, Johnson Associates
Systems, Inc.



Alton Shaw
Vice President of Operations
PRWT



Raymond K. Jones
President
We See You, LLC



Dr. Funke Olayinka, MD
Owner Nothing Bundt Cake, Wayne, NJ
Founder and CEO, GHIT Consulting, Inc.



Will Smith
Vice President
Corporate Shared Services
South Jersey Industries (SJI)



Robert D. Warrington, Esq.
Founding Partner, Dawkins & Warrington
Law Group, LLC



Thomas Webster
Chief Executive Advisor
2020 Business Advisors

COMMUNITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



John E Harmon, Sr., IOM
Founder, President & CEO
AACCNJ



Schnearia Ashley
Co-Chair, Community Board of Directors
Senior Vice President
Truist Commercial Banking



Viviana Lamm
Co-Chair, Community Board of Directors
CEO, Risk Strategy Solutions



Carin Hep
Assistant Vice President, Small Group & Individual Broker Channel
Sales, Delta Dental of New Jersey, Inc.
Delta Dental of Connecticut, Inc.



Stacey Kavanagh
Vice President
Market Manager
Provident Bank



Wendy Lanski
Director, Enterprise Vendor
Management & Operations
Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ



Erik Larsen
Team Leader
C&I Northfield Bank



Bill Stephney
Principal Executive
Broad Market Media



Jackie P. Taylor
Partner/Principal, US Alliance &
Ecosystems Leader Public Sector, EY



Ralph D. Weaver
Founder & CEO
East West Connections



Lawrence Wooten
Senior Manager, Supplier Diversity
American Water



Dr. Denise Anderson,
Founder & CEO, Denise Anderson
& Associates (DA&A) LLC



Tasha Youngblood Brown, MBA, CISA
Managing Director
EY

DISPARITY STUDY TASK FORCE



Marcus Dyer, CPA, JD,
Treasurer, AACCNJ
WithumSmith+Brown, PC



Tanya Freeman, Esq.
Chair, NY State Black Business Alliance
(NYSBBA) and Managing Partner Family
Law Practice Group



John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM
Founder, President, & CEO, AACCNJ



Robert Johnson, Esq.
Secretary, AACCNJ
Chief Diversity Officer, Gibbons Law



Gary Mann
Chairman, AACCNJ
CEO, Jasfel Analytics



Monique Nelson,
Executive Chair, UniWorld Group
(UWG)



Tammeisha Smith
Vice Chair, AACCNJ
CEO, Dunbar Center, Inc.



Robert Warrington, Esq.
Former Vice-Chair, AACCNJ
Founding Partner, Dawkins &
Warrington Law Group, LLC

AACCNJ STAFF



John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM
Founder, President & CEO



Jacqueline Baptiste
Executive Advisor to President & CEO
& Brand Ambassador



Mary Griffin, PMP, IOM
Vice President of Membership
Retention & Programs



Nicole Baptiste, IOM
Vice President, Membership
Acquisition & Financial Management



Carmen Gates
Vice President of Community
Development and External
Affairs Officer



Tammy Holloway
Senior Membership & Program Specialist
NYSBBA, AACCNJ



Vivian Harmon
Executive Director
Training & Development Institute



Jayme Rittenburg
Administrative Assistant



Bydeia Harmon
Community
Development Officer



Demetra Alston
Outreach Coordinator
Training & Development Institute

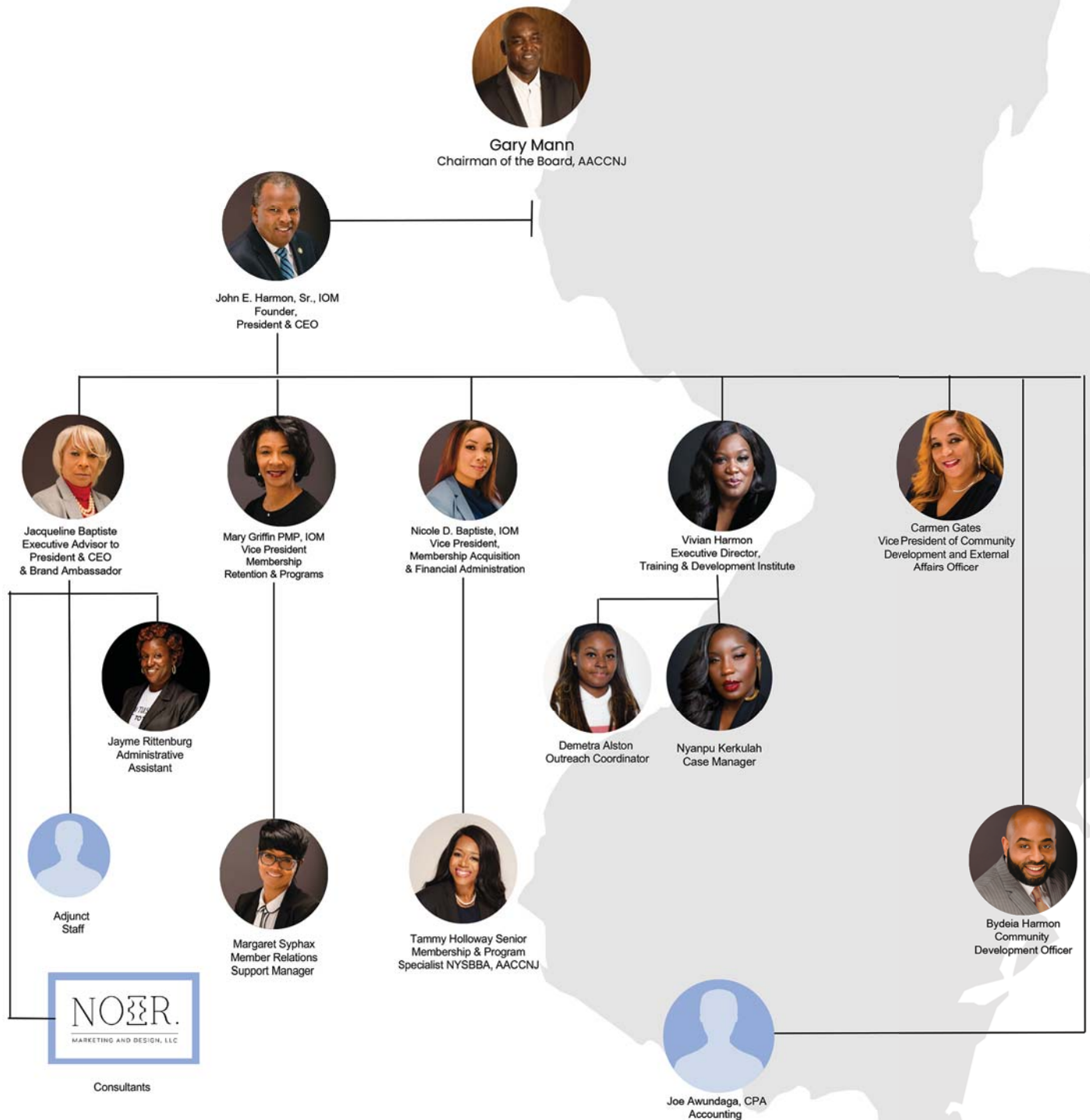


Nyanpu Kerkulah
Case Manager
Training & Development Institute



Margaret Syphax
Member Relations
Support Manager

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



WWW.NYS-BBA.COM
INFO@NYS-BBA.COM
FOLLOW US @NYS_BBA



NEW YORK STATE

BLACK BUSINESS

A L L I A N C E

MISSION STATEMENT

The New York State Black Business Alliance (NYSBBA) was created to empower and sustain Black businesses and the communities where they are domiciled through entrepreneurship and capitalistic initiatives across the State.

While providing a platform for New York's Black business leaders to speak with a collective voice, the NYSBBA advocates and promotes economic diversity while fostering a climate of business growth through major initiatives.

We are dedicated to creating economic equity in public and private sector opportunities, fair representation in governmental policy and sustainable job development for Black communities throughout the state.



NEW YORK STATE BLACK BUSINESS ALLIANCE

JOHN HARMON
THE JOURNEY

THE DATA

TARGET AREAS FOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- Advocacy for a business agenda that is inclusive, fair, equitable and affords capitalistic activities to be engaging, impactful and transformative.
- Healthcare
- Maritime, Transportation, and Infrastructure
- Technology and Innovation
- Equity in Public and Private Sector Opportunities
- Education and Workforce
- Public Policy Engagement

Black Median Household Income

2021

\$48,297 - \$24,623 less than other demographics

The median household income in New York amounted to \$72,920, while Black household income stood at \$48,297.

Homeownership

2022

31.9% lower than the US national average

NY State Black Home Ownership Rates in 2022 were 34%, which is 31.9% lower than the US national average; and 21.9% lower than the New York State average.

Poverty Rates

2021

13.9 percent of New Yorkers – or nearly 2.7 million people – lived in poverty in 2021, compared to 12.8 percent of all Americans.

20.3 percent of Blacks in New York lived below poverty level in 2021

STEERING COMMITTEE



John E. Harmon Sr., IOM
Founder, CEO & Chairman
New York State Black
Business Alliance



Arnold Baker
President
Black Marlin Marine



Michael Gardner MBA
Chief Diversity
& Inclusion Officer MTA
New York State



Gary Mann
President & CEO,
Jasfel Analytics



Christine McMahon
President and CEO
FedCap



Monique L. Nelson
CEO
UGW



Tammeisha D. Smith
Elected Official,
Noted Community
Advocate and Volunteer



Jackie P. Taylor,
SHRM-SCP, SPHR
Partner/Principal, EY
US Alliances
& Ecosystems
Leader-Govt
& Public Sector

EST. JUNE 2007



African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY

Accredited State Chamber
of Commerce with Distinction
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

5 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



The Socioeconomic Standing of Blacks In NJ and Public Policy

New Jersey is home to 1.2 million blacks and over 124,000 black owned businesses. Blacks voted 94 and 96 percent respectively for the Murphy Administration in their two terms in office. Blacks have the highest poverty and unemployment; their net worth is \$17,000 vs \$322,000 for whites. Homeownership for blacks is 40 percent vs 70 percent for whites.

Legislative/policy issues that would make a significant impact on economic opportunities and disposable income for blacks if they were modified or abolished in New Jersey.

- Insurance companies in New Jersey, except for CURE Auto Insurance, use **Education, Occupation and Credit Scores as proxies to determine auto insurance premiums.**
- Most accountants use GAAP- Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to confirm financial soundness of businesses. However, there is a law which allows CPAs with a **Registered Municipal Accountants (RMA)** designation exclusively to audit the financial conditions of municipalities in New Jersey. There are approximately 20,500 CPAs and only 135 CPAs with an RMA. This law excludes many CPAs from performing audits within their communities notwithstanding experience and capacity.

2024 New Jersey Revised Statutes

Title 45 - Professions and Occupations

Section 45:2B-70 - Requirements for qualification as registered municipal accountant

Universal Citation:

NJ Rev Stat § 45:2B-70 (2024)

45:2B-70. Requirements for qualifications as a registered municipal accountant

29. A certified public accountant or public accountant holding an active license shall qualify as a registered municipal accountant by passing a registered municipal accountant's examination. Only a registered municipal accountant licensed in this State shall undertake the work of auditing the financial statements of any municipality or county.

The board shall make all the rules governing examinations and the issuance of licenses to registered municipal accountants.

The registration fee for a registered municipal accountant of New Jersey shall be established by the board and shall be imposed for each triennial registration.

L.1997, c.259, s.29; amended 2001, c.149, s.9.

- Governor James McGreevey established the **Project Labor Agreements (PLA)** in 2002 as his first Executive Order at a threshold of \$5 Million Dollars. Subsequently, Presidents Obama and Biden had PLA thresholds of \$25 Million and \$35 Million respectfully. We would like to have the threshold levels in New Jersey raised to align with the federal government. This change would allow more businesses to compete for taxpayer funded projects thus potentially impacting the 93 percent sole proprietorship rate of black businesses in New Jersey.

- [BILLS A-4586/S-3639](#)

The current version of each bill can be accessed through the above links.

The importance of arriving at the best legislative outcome for Public Contracting in New Jersey:

What the chamber is seeking from the legislature:

1. Disaggregation of Public Contracting Spend.
2. Application of aspirational goals to all state procurement spending.
3. Insertion of liquidated damages in procurement contracts.

Statewide Disparity Study

A few highlights from the New Jersey Disparity Study results revealed that Black-owned businesses received ~1% (or less) of state contracts in all industries between fiscal years 2015-2020:

Black-owned businesses received 13, or 0.43% of all formal construction prime contracts awarded during the study period, representing \$3,302,674 or 0.03% of the construction prime contract dollars (as compared to \$10.8 billion awarded to White-male-owned businesses).

Black-owned businesses received 65, or 1.15% of all formal professional services prime contracts awarded during the study period, representing \$13,736,729 or 0.34% of the professional services prime contract dollars (as compared to \$3.4 billion awarded to White-male-owned businesses); and

Black-owned businesses received 62, or 0.53% of all formal goods and services prime contracts awarded during the study period, representing \$12,227,367 or 0.38% of the goods and services prime contract dollars (as compared to \$2.9 billion awarded to White-male-owned businesses).

These statistics are disheartening in light of New Jersey's diverse population and the number of qualified/available MWBEs in the State:

- o Black-owned businesses represent 9.19% of the available construction businesses and received 0.14% of the dollars on construction contracts valued over \$65,000 to \$5,710,000.
- o Black-owned businesses represent 12.01% of the available professional services businesses and received 1.44% of the dollars on professional services contracts valued over \$40,000 to \$800,000.
- o Black-owned businesses represent 10.08% of the available goods and services businesses and received 0.46% of the dollars on goods and services contracts valued over \$40,000 to \$360,000.
- o Black-owned businesses represent 5.97% of the available prime contractors for informal contracts and received 0.75% of the dollars on informal prime contracts for all industries.

The underutilization in each of these categories is statistically significant.

- Additional Bills

AACCNJ is also working on A-4724/S-3502, A-4723/S-3505, and A-4485/S-3573.

Thank you.

John E. Harmon, Sr.
Founder, President & CEO, AACCNJ

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EST. JUNE 2007



African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY

Accredited State Chamber
of Commerce with Distinction
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

6 TRIBUTES, ADS ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TESTIMONIALS

John Harmon's leadership has been nothing short of transformational, not just for the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, but for the entire business landscape of our state. Through his unwavering advocacy, tireless commitment, and clear vision, John has empowered countless entrepreneurs and driven real economic opportunity where it's needed most. Professionally, I've witnessed the ripple effect of his work, elevating businesses, building bridges across communities, and inspiring a culture of excellence. John, your legacy is already profound, and I'm honored to be part of the story you continue to write. On his birthday, I am honored to celebrate Mr. Harmon's enduring legacy and offer my gratitude for the remarkable contributions he has made to our state, our communities, and our collective future. With highest regards and best wishes -

Carla Cefalo - Middlesex County, NJ

"I had just started my business when I first heard the name John Harmon. It was at an event at NJPAC where Governor Phil Murphy mentioned John from the podium. I don't remember the exact context, but I remember thinking, 'I need to find out who this person is.' A little research revealed not only who John was, but also the work he was doing. That's when I knew I had to join the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ). A big part of my career has been generating six and seven figure deals, with annual targets running deep in this range. I understood the value of attending events where decision makers and potential partners gathered. What I didn't expect, as I attended my first couple of AACCNJ events, was the feeling of having someone fight for my business just as hard as I fought for it myself. John is charismatic, but he is also a fierce fighter, an intelligent and shrewd business leader who never hesitates to advocate for us. Since joining the Chamber, both my business in New Jersey and my personal growth have expanded exponentially. I work hard, I put in the effort, and I believe I am just as capable as my competition regardless of who they are or their size. But I also recognize that my membership in the Chamber has been a major factor in my success. John, your leadership has created a platform where Black businesses are not only represented but truly empowered to grow and thrive. Your determination has opened doors and inspired a new level of excellence in all of us. For me personally, your advocacy has helped my business expand and given me the validation of seeing someone fight for others with passion and purpose. I know your influence will continue to shape the future of Black businesses here in New Jersey and across the country. I am proud to stand as one of the many businesses stronger today because of your leadership."

Gary Mann - Jasfel Analytics

John, the consummate professional that is so much more than a chamber president! John has done his very best... by blood, sweat, in tears - to provide a way to get folks into the "room where it happens!" We are forever grateful for the leadership displayed by this great Brother! Happy Birthday and may God richly bless - all that you do.

Jared Green - Langan

John Harmon's leadership has transformed the landscape for African American businesses across New Jersey and beyond. His vision, integrity, and tireless dedication continue to create opportunities that empower communities and drive meaningful change. We honor him not only on his birthday, but for his lasting legacy he is building through service and leadership

Dr. Clint & Tress Parker, LeaderLift

To Dr. John Harmon, my young brother,

March 2020 the pandemic forced all of us to lock down and draw upon our trust and faith in GOD. Our spiritual strength was no doubt tested. Our realities pulled upon that strength to survive. Some of us were unexpectedly impacted by furloughs that created an even stronger reliance on our faith. I encountered challenges that required intervention—I called upon John to connect me with those who could provide resolution...he did and they did. And when it happened again, I was able to contact John's referral for immediate results. When I think about the goodness of GOD In the NAME OF JESUS, I am so thankful for John in this time of great need. My prayer is that he receives multiplied blessings for all the good he has done and continues to do not only for me but for all the lives that GOD has enabled him to impact. Happy Birthday John. I pray GOD continue to prosper and bless you with wisdom, health, and strength!

Dr. Anita Rivers - Fairleigh Dickinson University

John Harmon is an outstanding visionary who is committed to excellence within the African American community. His consistent dedication to these causes creates and sustains opportunities for many businesses and individuals that would not otherwise benefit from his efforts. John, we humbly and graciously appreciate your work. Happy Birthday and God Bless you good brother!

L. Greg Smith- B.E.S.T Talent Management Strategies

"May this year be abundant with exciting opportunities, great successes, and many memorable moments. The Enterprise Center of New Jersey wishes you a remarkable birthday filled with innovation, achievement, and happiness! Your visionary leadership at the AACC of NJ, including your work to expand access to resources and opportunities for small businesses across New Jersey, continues to inspire and uplift our community. May this year bring you exciting opportunities, great successes, and many memorable moments."

Victoria Hosendorf - The Enterprise Center of New Jersey

As a proud member of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ), I am deeply grateful for the leadership and vision of John Harmon. From the very beginning, John and the AACCNJ team have been incredibly warm and welcoming, creating an environment where members feel truly valued. Through his guidance, Hopeworks has not only gained access to meaningful speaking opportunities and connections but also to a community that champions growth, equity, and collaboration. The Chamber's conferences and events consistently provide valuable content and connections that help us learn, grow, and strengthen our impact. John's unwavering commitment to advocacy and opportunity has made a real difference for us and so many others across New Jersey. It is an honor to celebrate his leadership and the lasting impact he continues to have on businesses, communities, and individuals alike.

Dan Krause - Hope Works

"Happy birthday to an exceptional gentle giant! Your dedication to helping business owners thrive is truly inspiring. The impact you have is immeasurable, and your results speak for themselves. Thank you for your contributions to SBR REALTY LLC and Central Jersey Board of Realtist. We respect and honor the fact that you don't just go the extra mile; you pave a new road entirely, and for that, we're all incredibly grateful. May your special day be filled with as much success and happiness as you bring to others."

Shelly Bryant - SBR Realty LLC and CJ NAREB



EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON THE JOURNEY

John, I sincerely thank you for your unwavering hard work and dedication in ensuring that our New Jersey businesses receive the help and support they truly deserve. You have been an incredible advocate for the small business community, tirelessly working to make sure resources are available and continue to be so. The challenges of this work are immense, yet your daily commitment and heartfelt efforts clearly demonstrate your passion for what you do. I deeply admire and praise you for this. Thank you for being the steadfast ground support and an exceptional partner throughout the years. It has been an absolute pleasure to get to know you and to work with you. I wish you a happy birthday and hope that you have an amazing day, you deserve it!

Christina Fuentes – NJEDA

I've long admired John Harmon's work, from my first meeting with him at the Metro Trenton Chamber of Commerce to witnessing his leadership at the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey. I have great appreciation and respect for John's unwavering commitment to the African American business community in New Jersey. Through his leadership, he has consistently created opportunities and advocated for countless businesses across the state, strengthening the economic landscape for everyone. His vision and efforts have opened doors and built a stronger, more inclusive business environment for us all. I am grateful for his leadership and proud to celebrate the impact and legacy he continues to shape.

Thurmon Cohen - TCAI, LLC

John Harmon is a Godsend, an Angel to many, a Savior to some, and an Enduring Spirit that persuades all of us to continue moving forward when obstacles arise.

John has helped me and my family, by finding opportunities, helping to open doors, and providing recommendation letters. As a result, I have been blessed with a successful banking and regulatory career and my own law firm with a pipeline of clients directly resulting from John's effort. More importantly, his efforts have allowed me to provide help and support to thousands of other African American families and businesses over the years. His friendly smile and endearing words are inspiring and contagious. He shows everyone by example how to cultivate success and empower by networking. The World needs more people like John Harmon.

Robert Tillman – Tillman Law Group

Happy Birthday Mr. John Harmon. The first time I was introduced to you by Mr. Danny Dunn at the Gala, I immediately recognized you as a man whose business skills I could learn from. Simply watching how you carried yourself and conducted business was an education in itself. Thanks to your example and inspiration, I was able to create the Inclusion Legacy Awards Gala. For that, I am truly grateful. On behalf of the entire Inclusion Team, we thank you and wish you many more joyful and successful birthdays.

Edward C. Funches – Inclusion

John, the AMCCNJ has been instrumental in helping me shape and realize my vision for my business by providing the tools, resources, and network to make it possible. I deeply admire your leadership and presence across the state, which has opened doors for so many entrepreneurs like myself. Whenever you are engaged, I feel as though my interests are also represented in the room, and for that I am truly grateful. Your influence and commitment continue to inspire me to aim higher and give back in the same spirit of service. Wishing you a very Happy Birthday to a true NJ Gem!

Naimah Terry- Terry Development LLC



EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON THE JOURNEY

During the height of COVID, John was a lifeline for so many of us. He made introductions to suppliers and customers on both sides which allowed us to secure critical supplies for vendors when they were needed most. He is the kind of leader you can call on his cell phone at any time, always ready to pick up and always ready to help. His commitment to opening doors for minority companies and ensuring we had the right connections has left a lasting impact on my business and on the community. I am truly grateful for his support and the opportunities he has created. Happy Birthday John. May this year bring you as much joy and fulfillment as you have brought to so many others.

Angelina Garcia -Y Not

Dear John, I want to congratulate you on your 65th birthday celebration. You have truly been a blessing to me. Your tenacity, resiliency, and dedication to your mission in helping black people and businesses grow and thrive is like no other. I thank God for giving you purpose and vision to start the AACCNJ and I thank him for our relationship. May God continue to bless and keep you". Happy Birthday My Brother!

Stan Prater – Former AACCNJ Board Chairman

Dr. John Harmon, Sr. is truly a man who talks the talk and walks the walk. Not only is he an incredible business and people connector, but he is also an outstanding and upstanding individual. I met John nearly 10 years ago after attending a few Chamber events with the organization I was working with at the time. I was fairly new to New Jersey and I was excited to connect with other local professionals. After getting back into the world of entrepreneurship full-time as a public relations consultant, I became a member of the African American Chamber of Commerce. To say that John and the Chamber have been influential in connecting me with others and opening doors and opportunities for me and my business would be an understatement. I am truly grateful for John's vision, his leadership, his commitment to seeing opportunities and a level playing field for African-American businesses in our state, and for him being one of the good guys – which is getting harder to find these days. John reminds me of one of my mentors I had growing up – former Atlanta Mayor, the late great Maynard H. Jackson, Jr. Like Maynard, John never meets a stranger, he gives 1000% to everything he does, and when speaking with him, he makes you feel seen and heard as if no one else is in the room. John, THANK YOU for being a change agent and for the hard work you give each and every day on behalf of others. So many lives have been positively impacted by you, and I am honored to say that mine is one of them. Wishing you a very Happy Birthday and more blessings on blessings for years to come.

Jemia Kinsey Singleton - Kinsey Communications

"When I moved to Mercer County in 2005 and launched my company, you were one of the first people I met who truly understood the plight of the entrepreneur. For over 20 years, I have witnessed you being a true champion for business owners and the community at large. As you celebrate your incredible milestone birthday, please also celebrate the countless lives you have touched in Mercer County, New Jersey and beyond!"

John Weaver, Founder & CEO, Varsity Software, Inc.

In 2021, I received training on how to become a developer, but at the time I was still searching for clarity about my path in the construction field and I lacked the social capital to fully pursue it. That changed when I joined AACCNJ. By 2025, I had committed to advancing my passion for development and construction, and when I shared that vision with Dr. John E. Harmon, he became the third person to believe in me. That brief conversation proved pivotal, opening the door for me to join the Construction Committee and giving me the confidence and direction to move forward. Through AACCNJ, I completed the bonding class, became bonded, and gained access to the legal documents and insurance requirements essential for success in this industry. More importantly, I built meaningful relationships that led to the creation of Empowerment Construction & Development (ECD)—a bonded firm with a physical office in University Heights, Newark. Today, ECD is credentialed as an affordable housing developer and provides home modifications and construction services that make housing safer and more accessible, serving at-risk populations and seniors across New Jersey. Along the way, I also earned a certificate in Construction Management, further strengthening my foundation. What began with a single conversation with Dr. John E. Harmon has grown into a company with real impact. His leadership was a turning point in my journey, and his vision continues to inspire me, as well as so many others, to build lasting legacies in the development and construction space.

Tiffany Weems- Empowerment Construction & Development

"Who would have thought 20 years ago when I met John, as I was networking trying to find a job, that we would be where we are today. I never did find a job, but I found a true friend and have been tickled to assist him in this ever-evolving journey of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey! It has been one of the most rewarding endeavors in my life. Continue to "keep hope alive" my friend."

Robert D. Warrington, Esq. – Dawkins & Warrington Law Group LLC

Thank you for truly understanding the assignment and standing firm in support of Black businesses and the Black community, both here in New Jersey and across the nation, through your many leadership roles. Your unwavering advocacy, even when others did not see the need for an African American Chamber of Commerce, has been transformative. Through perseverance and vision, you built AACCNJ into an institution of prominence, with even greater impact yet to come. Thank you for carrying the weight of leadership in the often lonely space of CEO and President, remaining steadfast in your commitment to increasing opportunities and building wealth for African Americans, thereby improving the well-being of Black communities statewide. "To leave a legacy of strength, dignity, and compassion is to truly live a life of purpose." Cheers to a life of purpose, John.

Denise Anderson – AACCNJ Board Member - New Jersey Public Health Institute

We were honored to have John join us as our 2025 Undergraduate Commencement speaker and to award him an honorary doctor of humane letters degree. John is a wonderful role model for our students, and we appreciate him sharing his personal and professional journey, and his words of wisdom, with our students. It was a memorable day for us at William Paterson University.

William Paterson University President Richard J. Helldobler

I first met Dr. John Harman when I was invited to attend a meeting with him and another engineer at the Mercer County Engineers Office. John's engaging and amicable personality was on display immediately. After the meeting, we had lunch at a Jamaican restaurant in Trenton. There and then I was convinced that we at Gedeon had to be members of the AACCNJ. I haven't regretted it for one moment and as I interacted with other chamber members, the one outstanding message that we all agreed on was John's affability, rapprochement, approachability, and ability to put one at ease. As you celebrate this birthday John, I am thankful for your leadership of the chamber and for always keeping the flag burning and urging all of us to "kick the door in" when the opportunity knocks, so we can get what is justly ours. Happy, happy birthday John.

Your Sierra Leonean brother, Melbourne Garber- Gedeon GRC Consulting



EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON THE JOURNEY

It has been an honor to witness and benefit from the incredible leadership of Dr. John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM, Founder, President, and CEO of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ). His greatest asset is his unwavering advocacy for Black-owned businesses, and truly, there has never been a better leader or advocate for the African American business community in New Jersey. I have been in business for over 35 years, and it was John who guided me through becoming DBE, MBE, and SBE certified. He not only explained why these certifications were vital, but he also opened many doors that strengthened and expanded my business opportunities. I am proud and honored to call you my friend. Happy Birthday, John—and may you celebrate many more to come!

Don Davis - Aerus Electrolux (Scrunch Enterprises LLC)

John, I hope you enjoy your birthday! I have great respect for you, not just for the opportunities you have provided to myself and countless others, but for the dedication you have to the mission of helping your people. You are relentless in your work. "You can't stop, you won't stop and you don't stop". Many thanks Brother. Happy Birthday!

Chris Daniel- Daniel Productions.

Dr. Harmon, I am thankful for the mentorship and example of leaders like you who are visionary, hardworking, and honest. Watching you speak truth to power is always a gift that energizes and inspires me. I'm excited to learn more from you and work together to serve the Black NJ community in ways we all deserve. God bless

Raheem Veal- Razor Sharp Global

John, Words can't describe how deeply touched I am to have you in my life, because you've made such a big mark on mine. I remember when I first met you, maybe four or five years ago, and you were doing what you do best: advocating for the people and community you serve. I was so impressed by your ability to take power in a room and turn it into positive passion for work that is so needed. From the bottom of my heart, I just want you to know how much I appreciate you and our friendship. You are such a gift to us, and God definitely took a little extra time when he made you. On this birthday, I just want to tell you Happy Birthday, my dear friend. I can't wait to spend many more with you. With love and deep admiration,

Schnearia Ashley – Truist Bank

John is one of the most influential and impactful leaders in the New Jersey business world. His stewardship of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ), as founder, president and CEO, speaks to a decades-long legacy of advocacy work on behalf of the state's Black business community. As a friend and admirer over the years, I have seen John work tirelessly on behalf of the AACCNJ. A fierce fighter for his community, John is a man of his word and expects no less from others. A true leader, he has a reputation for getting things done and holding those in public office to their promises. John is also a man of many talents. His bigger -than- life personality and natural charisma have been on display on radio and television over the years. I have had the distinct pleasure of being a guest on his radio program, the Empowerment Hour, to discuss government services and resources for Black-owned businesses. I enjoy immensely our discussions and always jump at the chance to catch up with John. Happy birthday to a true New Jersey original!

Melanie Willoughby-NJBAC

It is a great honor indeed to acknowledge how John's influence has helped shape our work in Camden. Twelve years ago, John introduced me to Ms. Lenora Green, who was then working at ETS in Princeton, NJ. Ms. Green asked John if he knew of an organization in Camden that had the capacity to sponsor a Children's Defense Funds Freedom School in Camden. John personally arranged a call to introduce us and accompanied Ms. Green during an in-person visit to meet with me at our church. As a result, 2026 will be our twelfth year sponsoring the Freedom School in Camden. Happy and Blessed Birthday, John Harmon!

Pastor Keith Davis – Camden Dream Center

Happy Birthday, John!

On behalf of myself and the entire team at LSN Contractors & Construction Managers, I want to take a moment to celebrate not only your birthday, but the extraordinary legacy you continue to build each and every day. Your leadership at the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey has been nothing short of transformative. You have been a tireless advocate and powerful force for ensuring that Black and Brown business owners are not only seen, but heard and included at the tables where major decisions are being made across New Jersey and beyond. You've created pathways where there were once roadblocks and built bridges where there were once walls. Because of your dedication, countless businesses, mine included, have found opportunity, visibility and belonging in spaces that were historically closed off to us. You've helped us navigate the complex terrain of government and corporate contracting, encouraged us to dream bigger and showed us just how valuable our contributions are to the industry. But what I admire most is what many don't see. The long hours, the quiet sacrifices and the emotional toll that comes with constantly fighting for equity in rooms that don't always welcome it. You carry that burden with grace, purpose and a rare kind of strength that inspires those around you. Your work has created generational ripples that will be felt for years to come. You've not only impacted policy, you've impacted people, families, futures and I'm proud to call you a partner, a friend, a leader and most importantly, a brother in the work. Wishing you a joyful, well-deserved birthday celebration. May this next chapter bring you as many blessings as you've given to others. –

Randy Washington – LSN Contractors & Construction Managers

Happy Birthday President John! On behalf of myself and my entire GCS team, we joyfully wish you a glorious Happy Birthday! I especially want to thank you for your great vision and the exceptional leadership you continue to provide for the AACCNJ. You have been a true inspiration and a tremendous blessing to us at GCS and far beyond. Being part of the AACCNJ has been a life transforming experience. We have been blessed with opportunities to connect with people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and leadership each doing amazing things in their communities, businesses, and beyond. Thank you for always leading us with wisdom and pointing us toward the right path and opportunities. We deeply appreciate your commitment and guidance. We wish you continued good health, abundant prosperity, and overflowing joy today and always. We love and appreciate you dearly. Godstime

E. Aigbodion & the GTime Team – Gtime Consultancy Services

John Harmon has been a great influence in my life. Back in 2007 when John started MTAACC. He asked me if I could print for him and I said yes. One of the best things I could have done for my business. During that time my business was very young - only a few years old. At some point the organization created a membership fee in which I could not afford so, I was not able at that time to continue. So, years back a friend of mine who is a member of the African American Chamber of Commerce of NJ came to my shop requesting that I reach out to Mr. Harmon. When I spoke to Mr. Harmon he once again asked me if I could print for the African American Chamber of Commerce of NJ and again, I said yes. Thank you, John Harmon for allowing MPAC Printing Service, LLC to be a part of this.

James Graves – MPAC Printing Services

Greetings Dr. Harmon. Thank you for your tireless work and unwavering dedication to the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey. Your inspiring spirit and commitment have made a profound impact, and I am truly grateful for all that you have done – and continue to do – to uplift, empower, and positively influence others. Your efforts have elevated my capabilities as an entrepreneur, and for that, you will always have my deepest respect and the well-deserved accolades that come with your leadership and vision. Wishing you a brilliant birthday filled with joy, love, and celebration – and many more to come! With deep appreciation

Dr. Marilyn Pendelton- Your Voice Heard

Happy 65th, John! For decades, you've opened doors for Black-owned businesses—fighting from the grassroots to the state level and moving the needle for New Jersey. I am proud to support the AACCNJ and grateful to call you a friend.

Nelson Ferreira- Ferreira Construction Co Inc.

John, when I met you at the Black Alumni Conference at Rutgers, all I had was a dream, a business formation, and business card. You reminded me that was enough. Since then, I've taken my dream, and my destiny to the next level. Thank you for being the hype man we all need, pushing entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs, and Black-owned businesses to keep going. Happy Birthday, John! Thank you for inspiring us to rise higher.

Catherine Sackey- Policy over Politics

Coming your way is a big expression of gratitude for your leadership and for all you do to build a more inclusive community. Just like a lighthouse in a storm your light served as a beacon for countless individuals. I say "thank you" on their behalf and world of gratitude for your guidance. We hope you have a fantastic celebration!

Barbara Stubbs – Business Promotion Ideas, Inc

I've had the privilege of knowing John for about ten years now, and I still remember the day I first met him. At the time, I was looking for an organization that could give entrepreneurs like me a fair chance to compete. As a minority working in firms, I often felt the disadvantages firsthand. What a blessing it was to encounter John. From the beginning, he accepted me with open arms—just as he does with everyone, no matter their background, strengths, or weaknesses. If you have a heart for helping Black businesses succeed or supporting the Black community in overcoming the challenges we face, John has a place for you. His impact on my career has been nothing short of incredible. He gave me hope at times when I had very little. He made me feel empowered in environments where I often felt powerless—where others had resources, contacts, and advantages that I didn't. Through his leadership and support, he helped level the playing field for me. You don't meet many people like John in a lifetime. I recognize how special that is, and I've tried to learn as much as I can from him. I am proud to say I've had the opportunity to walk this journey with him. More than he knows, I deeply appreciate all that he has done for me, and I celebrate the remarkable person and leader he is.

Marcus Dyer- Withum Smith+Brown PC

John, you have consistently proven to be a person of wisdom and charisma. Your enthusiasm and flair inspire me and everyone around you. Thank you for championing Black businesses and ensuring we honor the relationships you have built over the years. It is an honor to have met you and to work with you. Happy Birthday!

Brandon Young- Young Management & Consulting

Happy Birthday John. Mr. Harmon exemplifies true leadership. I am incredibly impressed by all he does to support, empower and uplift the members of the AACCNJ members.

Nadine Brown – N&R Divine Cleaning Service

John Harmon is someone who I've always respected from the first time meeting him. He is always someone who I consider a professional statesman and someone who is always looking out for the community, the chamber and the people who represent New Jersey. I've had the pleasure of seeing John present at events, promote the advocacy of the AACCNJ for many years and also represent himself in a way where people want to be in his company. John continues to give of himself in so many ways to increase opportunities for others. I would like to send a special Happy Birthday to John, and wish him many more celebrations of life.

Jason Murray- Abundant Network, LLC

John, It was a pleasure working with you to promote the work of the chamber and your members. Thank you for your support of Georgian Court. We are proud to count you as one of our alumni as an honorary degree recipient. All the best.

Joe Marbach-Retired President, Georgian Court University

I registered my Cyber Security Company in March 2017. I had the business, but I didn't have a constant vehicle to give me new leads. In 2018, I traveled to Jersey City for a meeting with someone leading a minority business program. He was surprised by how far I came for the meeting. He asked me if I knew a man named John Harmon. I said no, he introduced me to Mr. Harmon the very next day, which was a Saturday. I have been a member since because of the great resource the chamber has been for our business. Happy Birthday Mr. Harmon and thank you for all you do!

Tony Wittcock - Cyber Security Consulting Ops

"Happy 65th Birthday! Wishing you a wonderful 65th birthday filled with joy and celebration. Your dedication to supporting New Jersey businesses and the incredible impact you've made through the Small Business Bonding Readiness Assistance Program (SBBRAP) is truly inspiring. Thank you for your leadership, commitment, and continues efforts to make a difference"

Joanne Brooks - JSSB Consulting

I am currently in negotiations with a major New Jersey government agency to publish their procurement notices. Until recently, my presentation had been received with only a lukewarm response. However, once I confirmed that I am a proud member of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, the tone shifted dramatically. The recognition of my Chamber affiliation immediately created a more supportive and receptive environment for my proposal. It is clear to me that my membership in the Chamber has elevated my credibility and strengthened my ability to connect with decision-makers. Thank you, Chamber, for the vital role you play in empowering and positioning businesses like mine for success.

Jim Wood- Minority Commerce Weekly

"Happy Birthday John! Your friendship, guidance and support have meant so much to me both personally and professionally. I'm grateful for all you do and wish you a year filled with joy, good health and continued success."

Glenda S. Thomas, CEO, Electra Lines LLC and Electra Grid Solutions



EST. JUNE 2007

JOHN HARMON THE JOURNEY

John Harmon has been our business' mentor and advocate. He really does what he says he's going to do! John is extremely busy yet always answers back timely. John has truly been a blessing to not only our business, but also to me and my family on a personal level, always willing to share his wise advice when asked, and concerned and caring about my family's well-being. As I age, I can count the number of people on one hand that I can turn to, John is one of them. As a member of the AACCNJ, John and I have laughed a lot together, but on the other hand he has also helped me through some of my most challenging times. And with those challenges, John was the epitome of what the scriptures meant when it said, "a brother is born for adversity".

Maurice Lash - Reuben Cooley Incorporated

I will always remember my first interview with Mr. Harmon. At the end of our conversation, I said, "It's not how you start, it's how you finish." He looked at me and said, "I like that, that's a strong way to end this interview." Hearing those words from him gave me a deep sense of encouragement and motivation. Mr. Harmon later introduced me to two Bank of America executives, and I am currently building those relationships. That introduction was a major step forward for me and a true example of his willingness to uplift others. I also attended the New York State Black Business Alliance event where Mr. Harmon and Don Peebles were the guest speakers. I was standing in the back of the room, and when our eyes met, Mr. Harmon acknowledged me and welcomed me from the stage. That moment meant a great deal to me. Sometimes it's the smallest gestures that leave the biggest impact, and Mr. Harmon has a way of making people feel seen and valued. I want to take this moment to say thank you. Mr. Harmon, your guidance, kindness, and support have made a real difference in my life. Wishing you a very Happy Birthday and many more to come. You are truly appreciated.

Nyene Baker - Visionary Philanthropy Group Inc.

Happy Birthday, Mr Harmon! As we celebrate this milestone, I am grateful for the opportunity to reflect on the extraordinary impact you have had on our chamber, our businesses, and our community. Since joining the board in 2021, I have seen firsthand your tireless commitment to advancing the success of African American businesses and ensuring their voices are heard throughout the state.

Your vision, advocacy, and dedication have created access to critical resources, whether through funding, grants, or strategic partnerships that position businesses to thrive. What I admire most is that your work extends far beyond the chamber itself. You care deeply about every African American business owner and community member across New Jersey, always working in their best interest.

Your passion, perseverance, and genuine care for people set you apart. It has been a privilege to serve alongside you and to witness the lasting difference you continue to make. On this special occasion, I celebrate you not only as the hardest-working Chamber President but also as a community leader whose legacy of service and advocacy inspires us all.

Oyin Ohwesi, Executive Assistant, GHIT Consulting, Inc.

Uncle John

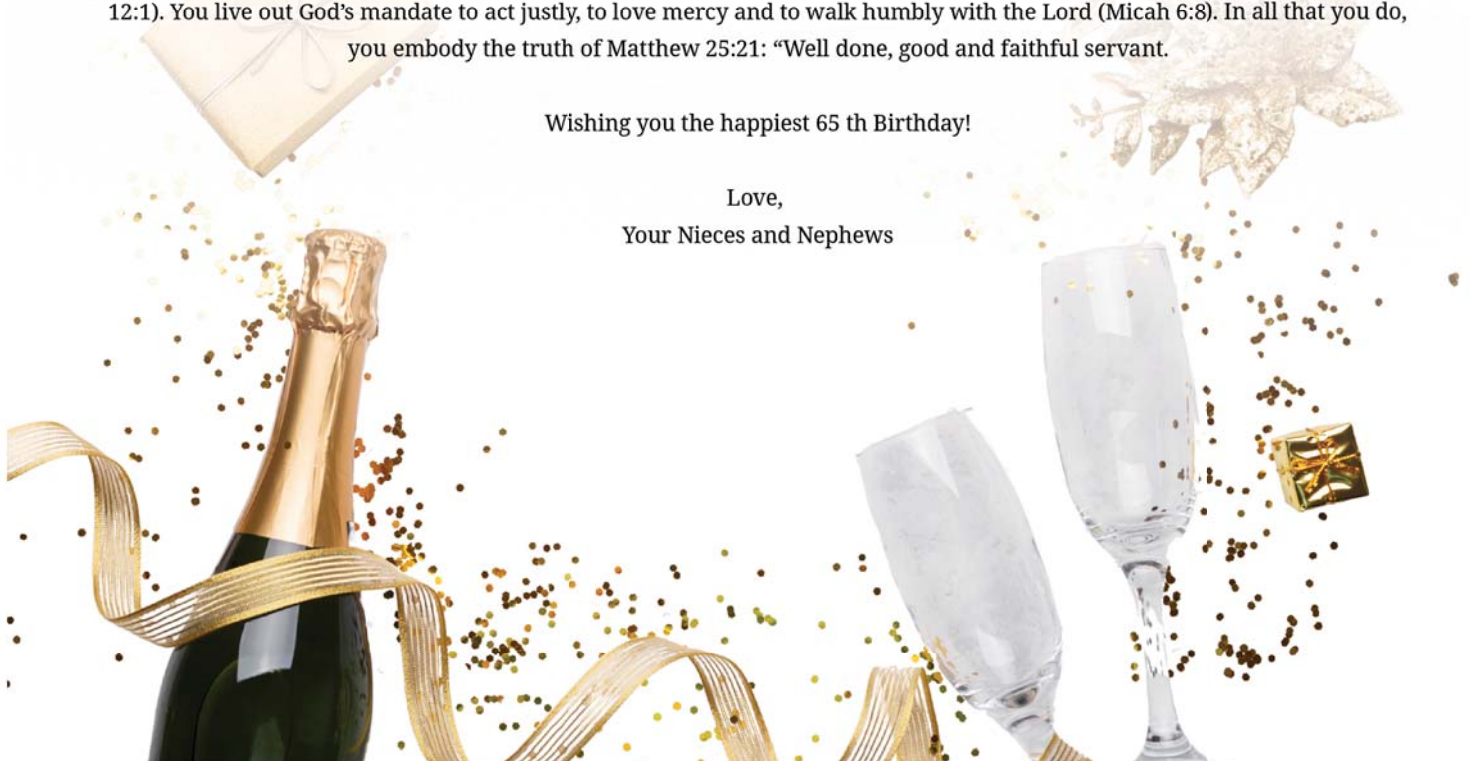
Whether you are a descendant of the Harmon or Ryland clans or close friends and extended family... you know UNCLE JOHN. He has a few names which we will spare him from sharing them with the masses but a few words that, no matter which niece or nephew you are talking at any given time, define who he is for all of us: father-figure, supporter, coach, guide, mentor, role model, provider, listener, visionary, foundation. As kids, he always seemed to be a giant—taller than all of his siblings and most of our family; bigger than life even. His voice, distinctive and powerful. His smile contagious as it reaches all the way back to his eyes. In his presence, you feel seen, heard and loved unconditionally. He can see through your mask and love you through your mess—He will celebrate your wins and support you through your losses. That's Uncle John.

His words resonate long after the discussion is done. His RESILIENCE... You can read the book; talk to him every day; work with him and there is still so much more to know... pages unwritten. I could go on... but I'll say this... whether he was there to: pick you up when you were down; stand tall with applause to celebrate your wins; gracefully lead you for your father-daughter dance on one of the most important days of your life; mentor you as you pursue the family legacy of entrepreneurship; be lucky enough to call him your Uncle and CEO- Uncle John has and will always be the true foundation of his family—anchoring generations in love, life and excellence. Let's not forget—growing up, Uncle John was always a man well immerse in his God and shared this openly with us all of our lives. So its is only fitting that I reference scripture to tell you how Uncle John understood the assignment!

Uncle John, You have and continue to honor the legacy and lessons of your parents. I'm certain you will continue to make them proud as they smile from the heavens (Exodus 20:12). You provide faithfully for your family and extended family (1 Timothy:5:8). You are a friend who loves at all times and a brother who stands strong in times of adversity (Proverbs 17:17). You are carrying out the wildest dreams of your ancestors with perseverance, running the race set before you! (Hebrews 12:1). You live out God's mandate to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with the Lord (Micah 6:8). In all that you do, you embody the truth of Matthew 25:21: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Wishing you the happiest 65 th Birthday!

Love,
Your Nieces and Nephews





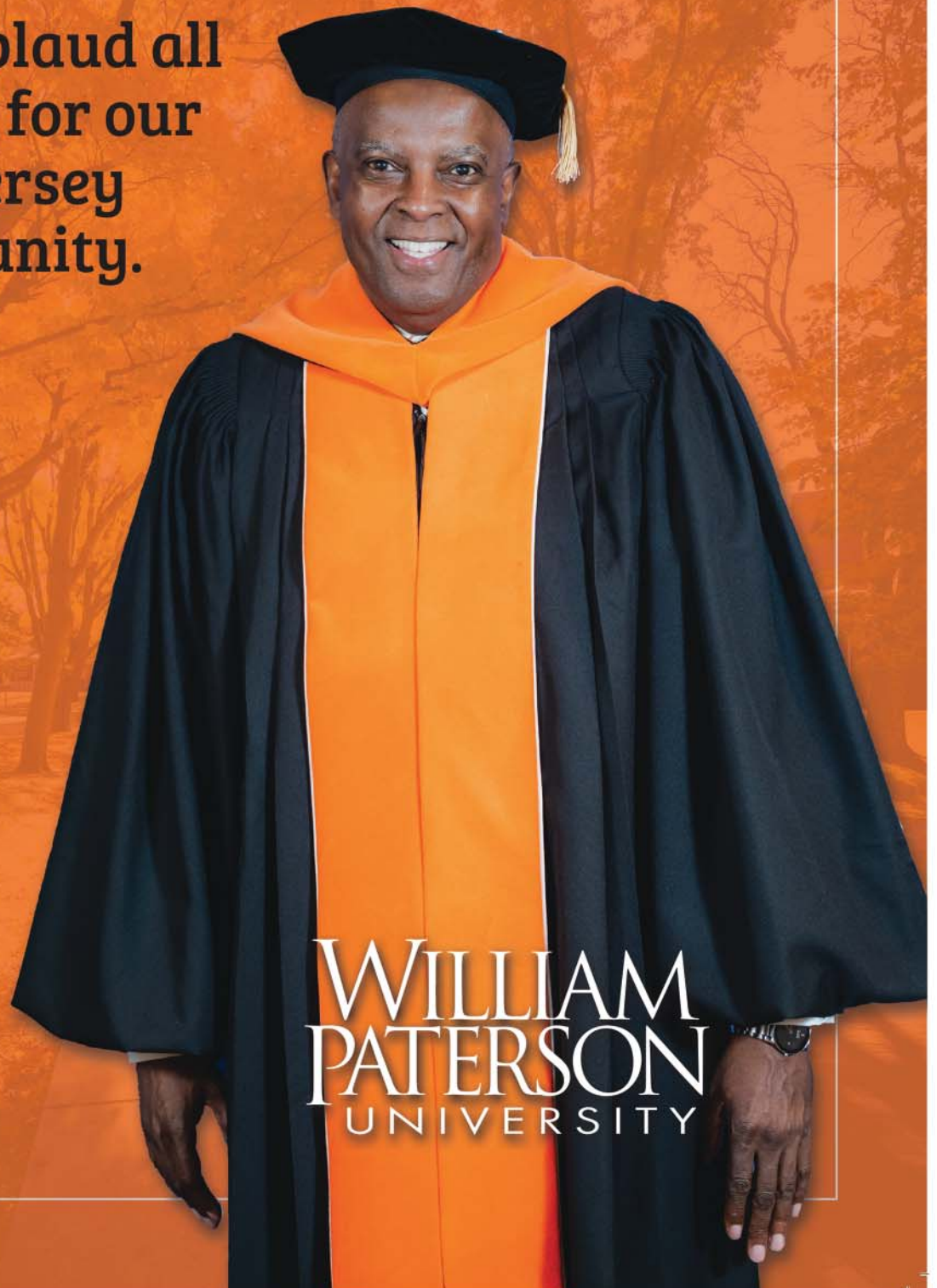
***JOHN, WISHING YOU A
VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
AND PRAYERS FOR MANY MORE!***

Happy 65th Birthday

Dr. Harmon!

From your friends at William Paterson University.

We applaud all
you do for our
New Jersey
community.



WILLIAM
PATERSON
UNIVERSITY

THINK FORWARD

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NEW JERSEY CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Congratulations to Dr. John Harmon

On your 65th birthday, we proudly celebrate your extraordinary leadership and lifelong commitment to empowering New Jersey's businesses and communities. As President of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, your vision, perseverance, and dedication have created countless opportunities and inspired generations of leaders.

Beyond our strong business bond, our personal friendship is highly valued by me. Wishing you continued success, good health, and happiness in the years ahead.

Warm regards,

Thomas A. Bracken

President & CEO

New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

njchamber.com





Happy Birthday!

The entire team at Jasfel Analytics and my family are honored to wish a well-deserved Happy Birthday! Thank you for your tireless commitment to economic development, business growth, and community advancement.

Your leadership is unparalleled. You are a leader and a force for change. You are a connector of people and a builder of legacies.

Thank you for your work, your vision, and the path you have paved.
With deep respect and admiration,

Gary Mann, Chair of the AACCNJ/Founder & CEO of Jasfel Analytics



Happy 65th Birthday Dr. John E. Harmon, Sr.

On this special occasion, T3 Creators Collective, LLC proudly salutes your life's work, marked by resilience, vision, and grace, as you continue to uplift African American businesses and entrepreneurs across New Jersey. With signature moves that are uniquely your own, you have built a legacy of excellence and inclusion that will inspire generations to come. May this milestone year bring you joy, fulfillment, and renewed inspiration.

Veda Shamsid-Deen, Esq. - Founder/CEO T3CC



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WE KEEP OPPORTUNITIES FLOWING



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American Water Awards & Recognition Highlights

The company was recognized as one of:

- Forbes 2025 Most Trusted Companies in America
- Forbes 2024 America's Best Large Employers
- Newsweek's 2025 America's Most Responsible Companies
- Barron's 2024 100 Most Sustainable U.S. Companies
- America's Most JUST Companies by JUST Capital and CNBC

Thank you

Thank you to the members of
the AACCNJ on behalf of the
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Jayme Rittenburg
Mary Griffin
Nicole Baptiste
Carmen Gates
Tress Parker

Adjunct Staff

Jessica Desmond
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Laney Mason
Sabrina Williams

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Business Promotions & Solutions
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Impact Printing
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360 Vinyl
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Thank you to our Media Partners





15TH ANNUAL

CORPORATE AWARDS DINNER

OCTOBER 16, 2025
6:00 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

PRINCETON MARRIOTT AT FORRESTAL
100 COLLEGE ROAD EAST, PRINCETON, NJ 08540

Ticket Price

Members: \$130

General Admission: \$150

Cocktail Attire



Noelle Baptiste

Co-Founder & Lead Graphic Artist
Noir Marketing & Design, LLC.

Tahji Wright

Co-Founder & Lead Digital Media Strategist
Noir Marketing & Design, LLC.

George Sowa

Founding Chief Executive Officer
Greater Trenton

Edward Funches

President
Inclusion Mobile Detailing

Darleen Gillespie

EVP & Chief Retail Banking Officer
First Bank

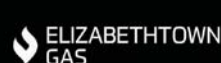
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2025 HONOREES



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LEARN MORE AT WWW.AACCNJ.COM





EST. JUNE 2007

7TH ANNUAL
**PARTY WITH
A PURPOSE**

111TH NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES

NOVEMBER 18, 2025
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

HARD ROCK HOTEL AND CASINO
BRIGHTON BALLROOM

Hard Rock
HOTEL & CASINO

Join the African American Chamber of Commerce of NJ at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Atlantic City, NJ, for our FREE event held during the New Jersey State League of Municipalities Conference!

TO REGISTER VISIT WWW.AACCNJ.COM OR SCAN HERE



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EST. JUNE 2007



African American
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF
NEW JERSEY

16TH ANNUAL CIRCLE OF ACHIEVEMENT

AWARDS GALA

LEADING THE WAY



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Accredited State Chamber
with Distinction

FEBRUARY 2026 19

THE VENETIAN
GARFIELD, NJ



Hackensack Meridian *Health*
would like to wish a
Happy 65th Birthday
Dr. John E. Harmon, Sr.



Member of the
Hackensack Meridian *Health* Board of Trustees



***Thank you for your service as a member of the
Hackensack Meridian Health Board of Trustees.***

FERREIRA



HAPPY 65TH BIRTHDAY TO DR. JOHN E. HARMON SR.! FERREIRA IS HONORED TO CELEBRATE THIS INCREDIBLE MILESTONE WITH YOU AND WISHES YOU CONTINUED HAPPINESS, HEALTH, AND SUCCESS.



OUR PEOPLE. OUR STRENGTH. OUR FUTURE.

Ferreira, a family-owned company, is built on safety, integrity, and reliability. With decades of experience in infrastructure, utilities, marine construction, and renewable energy, we deliver innovative solutions with a commitment to quality. Our employees drive our success, and we prioritize their well-being and growth. As a national leader, we blend tradition with technology to execute complex projects safely and efficiently—building with purpose and shaping the future of construction.





The African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey has been incorporated as a 501(c)(3) in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code and provides advocacy and support for businesses throughout the State of New Jersey.

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