



## About the Chamber

Founded in 1935 as the city's first African American civic organization, the Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce (HCCC) has evolved into an active participant in the City of Houston's socioeconomic process.

HCCC is the "go-to" organization for business development and community outreach partnership opportunities in the Houston African-American community. HCCC is dedicated to supporting African-American small businesses in the areas of education, certification and accessing contracting opportunities and capital. The organization is a 501(c) 6, not-for-profit, private, member-driven organization.

HCCC is Houston's premier source for identifying quality and qualified African-American, multi-sectored small businesses to do business with. HCCC has a database of over 1,600 unique resources and members.

The organization has earned Houston's trust and has built solid alliances with the Port of Houston Authority, Small Business Administration, Greater Houston Partnership, Houston Community College System, Texas Southern University, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Grijalva & Allen and others to ensure it is providing accessible resources to its members and the business community.

Partnering with HCCC is synonymous with having access to potential new customers, quality African-American small business resources and demonstrates a care for doing business with the minority community.

## Our Mission

HCCC's mission is to promote and develop business interests and issues within the greater Houston area.

## Our Programs

Houston has the fourth-largest number of African-American owned businesses of any U.S. city and the most in the State of Texas. Supporting that trend and upholding the mission, HCCC is dedicated to helping business owners grow and become more than a small business, but an enterprise.



## Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce Programs

HCCC accomplishes its mission by executing the following programs:

- Education Program. The Program's mission is to have a positive impact on the attitudes, values and behaviors necessary for student success in and out of the classrooms. In partnership with the Houston Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, college scholarships are awarded to students throughout Houston who might not otherwise have an opportunity to realize their education goals.

Outcome: Sixty-eight (68) youths in African-American and Hispanic communities have received college scholarships over the past two years.

- International Trade. The Chamber's International Trade Division was established in 2002. The mission is to develop business opportunities abroad for small businesses via trade forums and trade missions. The Chamber has led missions to Trinidad and Tobago, Africa and China in August 2007.

Outcome: HCCC has had three successful trade missions since 2003; Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Africa. HCCC is in the midst of its fourth trade mission to China, and has established key contacts in the major cities it is visiting to help provide current and future business opportunities to its members.

- Business Development. An "Outreach Office" has been established at the Chamber in partnership with the Small Business Administration. The satellite office is designed to give business owners or potential business owners a basic understanding of programs offered by the SBA. The outreach office helps small businesses raise capital and explains how to prepare for a loan proposal.

Outcome: The SBA along with other partners such as the Internal Revenue Service, provide training and workshops bi-monthly to assist the business community with accessing capital, packaging loans, understanding business and payroll tax, and much more.

- Economic Development. Small businesses are aided by the Chamber's service agreements with government agencies, which provide certified businesses with contract bidding opportunities.

Outcome: HCCC partners with organizations such as the Port of Houston, Grijalva & Allen, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Washington Mutual Bank, Unity National Bank, Texas Southern University and many more to ensure that its members are equipped with knowledge, skills, certification training, technical assistance training and resources needed to bid on projects and contracts, as well as run a profitable and successful company.



## Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce Partnerships

### Corporate/Small Business Partnership Opportunities

- Corporate representatives and small business owners may serve on business development strike teams formed to address ongoing education needs of small businesses.
- Corporate representatives and small business owners are encouraged to actively participate in HCCC hosted programs:
  - Quarterly Membership/Orientation Meetings
  - Monthly Business After Hours
  - Bi-Monthly Business Luncheons
  - Annual Meeting, Installation of Officers Banquet
  - Education Achievement Awards Scholarship Luncheon
  - International Trade Conference
  - African American Business Achievement Pinnacle Awards
  - Port of Houston Authority Boat Tours
  - Trade Missions

### Benefits of Partnership

#### Corporations and Small Businesses:

- Access to quality and qualified small businesses
- Access to active civic leaders in the African-American community
- Access to an organization that is able to quickly mobilize resources to address citywide issues and opportunities
- Exposure via HCCC bi-monthly "Promoter" newsletter

#### Small Businesses:

- Access to construction sub-contracting information
- Access to Port of Houston contracting information
- Access to job opportunity bulletin board
- Direction to sources of technical assistance and counseling services
- Access to educational opportunities
- Access to conference room facilities



## HCCC Partnership Case Study

HCCC is the “go-to” organization for business development and community outreach partnership opportunities in the Houston African-American community. An example follows.

### Challenge:

The Greater Houston Partnership was contacted by Nigerian government officials to provide guidance on bringing a three-day conference to Houston. The conference was set for February 24, 26-27 and the initial call to the Partnership was made three weeks prior to the start of the conference.

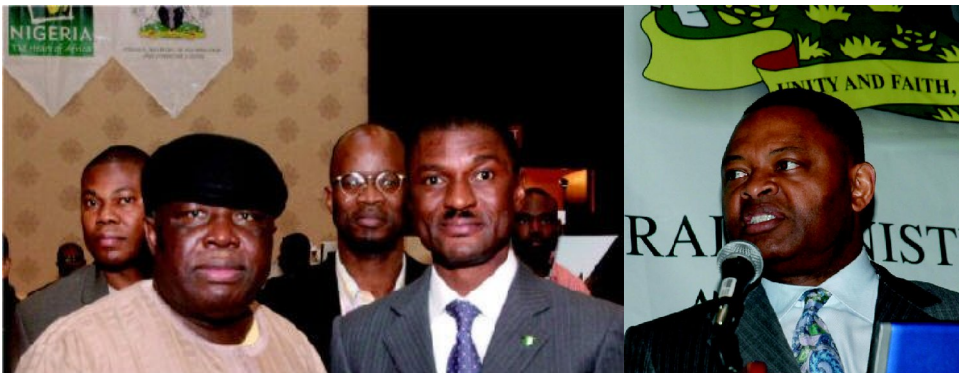
### Solution:

The Greater Houston Partnership contacted HCCC for direction and leadership on the project. HCCC quickly mobilized an event planning and promotions team to fully execute the three-day conference with its oversight.

### Outcome:

## NIGERIA: THE HEART OF AFRICA 2007

The Houston Citizens Chamber of Commerce was proud to host the “Nigeria: The Heart of Africa” image management and economic development conference on February 24, and 26-27, 2007. Over the three days, more than 1,000 guests attended the Heart of Africa events, which included a town hall, official welcome with Council member Ron Green bringing city of Houston greetings; African art exhibition; business forum and gala.



Led by the Honorable Minister Frank Nweke Jnr., Minister of Information and Communication and presented by the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Information and Communication, the mission of the conference was to attract foreign direct investment, address negative international image matters that hinder economic and cultural progression, and reinvigorate a spirit of national pride among Nigerians.

“Nigeria is a 'can do' nation,” said Dr. Kase Lawal of his native country. “The future of Nigeria remains very bright, as it is blessed with abundant resources and good proximity to global markets,” he noted.

Houston, the fourth stop on the tour, was chosen as a conference city due to existing major oil and gas business partnerships with Nigeria.

### About the Heart of Africa Project

The Heart of Africa project is a cohesive information program for Nigeria’s image management and economic progression.



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\*HCCC Board Members represent many of Houston’s outstanding corporate and civic leaders, such as:

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The Branch Companies  
(An African-American-owned franchise development firm)

Brian Smith  
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