



decade of diversity 2006 Leadership Conference

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HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY'S TOP EXECUTIVES TO CONVERGE IN BOSTON FOR DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

MFHA Celebrates Past Successes and Explores What's Ahead

(Providence, R.I...July 6, 2006) The **Multicultural Foodservice & Hospitality Alliance (MFHA)**, a non-profit organization promoting the economic benefits of diversity in the industry, presents its "**Decade of Diversity**" **Tenth Anniversary Conference** and **Gala Dinner** from **Sunday, August 6, through Tuesday, August 8, 2006**, at the **Hyatt Regency Cambridge** in **Boston, Mass.** The only event of its kind within the foodservice and hospitality industry, MFHA's annual conference allows top executives to collaboratively take a good look at where diversity initiatives of the last decade have succeeded and strategize how to effectively apply these achievements towards future growth.

"It's been an exciting ten years, but we have a long way to go," says **MFHA President** and **Founder Gerry Fernandez**. "In order to improve national economic performance in our sectors, we need to continue to see minority business ownership increase, minority career profiles advance and cross-cultural communication improve. This conference is the only place where so many of our peers can join together and brainstorm on how we can take it to the next level."

Drawing on the expertise of minority community leaders and top foodservice and hospitality professionals, "Decade of Diversity" will feature such speakers as **Fred Canady**, VP of supplier diversity for the **Pepsi-Cola Company**; **Jon Luther**, CEO of **Dunkin' Brands**; **Juliette T. Okotie-Eboh**, VP of community affairs for **MGM Grand Detroit Casino**; **Vijay K. Sharma**, VP of information systems and technology for **Sodexo USA**; **Richard Snead**, president and CEO of **Carlson Restaurants Worldwide Inc.**; and **Don Thompson**, executive VP and COO of **McDonald's USA, LLC**. Also featured will be **Chef Jeff Henderson**, author of the 2007 memoir **Cooked: One Man's Journey from the Streets to the Stove**. Henderson will reflect on the challenges he faced as a convicted felon and African-American in the world of haute cuisine.

MFHA will use the conference to introduce a new version of the successful **Sed de Saber™** educational series developed by Retention Education. Since mastering language and communication are imperative to advancement, this device helps English-speaking managers communicate in Spanish with Spanish-speaking employees. More information can be found at <https://mfha.net/Services.aspx>.

MFHA is partnering with Plays for Living (www.playsforliving.org) to present a production of "**Diversity Business Theater: A Crash Course in Diversity**." Engaging attendees by encouraging audience participation, this live interactive role-play will arm conference-goers with a better awareness of tough issues that occur in the workplace. Each staged drama shares a common goal: to bring the unspoken out in the open.

The Tenth Anniversary Gala Dinner on Tuesday evening will bring the festivities to a close, where the **Corporate Champion's Award**, **Ernest Henry Royal Pioneer Award** and **MFHA Strategic Examples of Excellence in Diversity (S.E.E.D.) Award** will be presented to individuals and corporations who best embody MFHA's mission of embracing and promoting multicultural diversity.

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To register, visit www.mfha.net or call 847.325.5850 by July 15, 2006. Registration for covering journalists is complimentary and special media rates are available from the Hyatt Regency Cambridge located at 575 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, Mass. Visit <http://mfha.net/PDFs/FinalAgenda.pdf> to view the conference agenda. MFHA board members and conference speakers are available for interviews. Please contact Jo Lipstadt at jo@civettacom.com with inquiries.

About the Multicultural Foodservice & Hospitality Alliance

Headquartered in Providence, R.I., the Multicultural Foodservice & Hospitality Alliance (MFHA) is a non-profit organization that promotes the economic benefits of diversity and inclusion in the restaurant, foodservice and hospitality industry. Founded by Gerry Fernandez in 1996, MFHA's business model centers around the image of a Dinner Table of Opportunity with four seats, each representing an industry component: workforce, customers, community and suppliers. MFHA's goal is to create programs and develop strategies for the needs and challenges of each "seat," allowing the diversity of cultures, ideas and perspectives from each component to provide the industry with the richest resources to advance, remain competitive and attract the best talent. To learn more about this inspiring organization, visit www.mfha.net.

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