

**T & D D  
L.L.C.  
CONSULTING**

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President & C.E.O.



**Members,**

First and foremost thank you for your sacrifice of time, talent and resources for the betterment of your community because without you there would be no 100 Black Men of America. The work the each of you do as an individual member of your chapter is what has made the difference in the lives of those that you have touched and the youth you have mentored. Most of you have not ever gotten any public recognition or reward but you continue to pour into our youth your wisdom and knowledge that they so desperately need. I pray that God you will continue bless you with whatever you may need to continue to do the work to empower our communities to achieve success.

And so it is my desire to work with you as I place my name in nomination for Chairman of the Board of the 100 Black Men of America. I realize like you that inasmuch as we see the challenges before us we have always been a people who have met those challenges rather than see ourselves as victims. Like you I realize that together we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. I am not a politician nor do I profess to be one. It is my belief that it is not necessary to make empty promises to men who have already accomplished more than others can imagine. You have already broken through barriers to make a difference as you spoke your own Truth to power. And it is that same Truth that I stand on today and tomorrow because it is written in John 8:32 "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free".

The opportunity is once again before us to decide if we have the courage to begin on a new trajectory for truth and growth. We must realize that while we accept that there has been a degree of success with our forerunners in the 100 that it is now time for fresh legs and new leadership. We must also accept that the life of any organization rests with a younger generation of leaders and innovators. Just as someone believed in us we must also pay it forward for it is in that belief that we are seen as a benefactor for change and growth. And as we embrace that change we will be demonstrating the true meaning of "what they see is what they'll be". For too many years and for too long there has been a misconception that only certain people or groups could become part of the leadership of the 100 BMOA or ever fathom the idea of becoming chairman of the board. It is time now to dispel that myth and for you to see yourselves as the leaders that you truly are. It is time to inspire your chapter members and mentees to see themselves as the next leaders in line to propel this organization to new heights with a vision for the future and not of the past.

This extraordinary opportunity places the pen in your hand to help write the history of the 100 Black Men Of America. A history that has seen only four (4) chairmen in its 34 years since incorporating in 1986. A history that has seen the current chair and vice chair elected and re-elected for twenty-six (26) years of those 34 years. A history that has seen seven (7) U.S. Presidents elected in the same span of time. A history that has seen many prominent men come and go for reasons that we may not know for sure but for reasons we can truthfully conclude based on information not readily shared. A history that has seen many promising men leave because of hitting the glass ceiling in our organization when they wanted and aspired to be all that they could be but were denied. A history that has seen board presidents methodically silenced with a reorganization strategy. A history that has seen your input and influence diluted recently with by-laws update. That pen is your vote not just for change for change sake but a change for the unheard and

disenfranchised among us. You must be the catalyst for the change to a brighter future and a richer history that you too should write.

This moment in time chose me it and it also chose you. I have seen and witnessed the slow deterioration of values and mission due to restricted access to financial, physical and intellectual resources of the organization. Resources that should be shared by all and for all no matter the chapter, city, state or political persuasion. This is a moment that you can not and must not ignore for to do so would constitute an act of omission which is the same as the act of commission. This is the moment when you as chapter presidents and chapter delegates get to raise your collective voice to say I want to be included heard, respected and not taken for granted. This is the moment when we accept that within our federation of chapters there are large and small chapters with varying degrees of proficiency and capabilities but who nonetheless deserve headquarters support. This is the moment that we must realize that when we say the "100 as One "means that until all chapters are successful that no chapter is successful. We must become more than just an organization with well written and spoken slogans. And that simply wearing a lapel does not make you someone to emulate but rather that you true body of work in the community does.

And that body of work is still needed today just as it was needed yesterday. Every chapter deserves a headquarters and staff that does not revolve monthly but one that evolves to become a service to it's chapter presidents and members. A headquarters committed everyday to meet the needs of chapters who looks to them for support such as grant writing and activations wherein all chapters may share in funds from our sponsors and partners. Where 80- 85% of those funds are properly disbursed to all chapters allowing them to continue with their body of work thereby supporting their community and not 57-62% as currently deployed. To see that in dollars means \$ 850,000 dollars out of every \$1,000,000 dollars going back to chapters. A headquarters and leadership that does not take credit for supporting it's members but one that takes pride in being accountable to them. We are an organization that has been

around long enough to know and do better .We must demand of our leadership what we demand of others and not apologize for it. We have been more than gracious patiently expecting and anticipating things to get better only to be bombarded with campaigning emails and fancy costly videos during election time.

So today you are reading this writing from me not as a politician as stated earlier but as a Christian guided not by simple by-laws but the supreme God's Laws. A member not unlike yourself asking where do we go from here. I will not bombard you with sugary emails and videos in a desperate last minute attempt trying to sell myself to you. That would be an insult to your integrity and a lack of moral sensibility for you and your time. I welcome a call or email should you desire to learn more about me and answer any questions you may have. However there are three major issues that must be addressed if we want our organization to flourish and be relevant.

1. You as Chapter Presidents must return to the board again as decision makers. Removing you was a mistake because it diluted your influence and silenced your voice.

2. Headquarters must be stabilized and become more service oriented. We lost 3 CEO's and 18 others during this current administration all without board knowledge.

3. We must develop a succession plan whereby there is a thru-put of younger leaders. Recycling leaders is unjustified because the organization is rich with untapped talent.

I can be reached at my email ...[vernon.durden@att.net](mailto:vernon.durden@att.net) or by phone at 409-201-2798

**IF NOT NOW.....WHEN !!!**  
**IF NOT YOU.....WHO !!!**