



ABFE KICKS OFF ITS 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE, “THE FIERCE URGENCY OF NOW,” IN MEMPHIS, TN ON APRIL 14th – 17th

ABFE-Member Organizations Represented at This Year’s Conference Include the Ford Foundation, Gates Foundation, Casey Family Programs, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies and Many More

The Nation’s Largest Gathering of Black Leaders and Professionals in Philanthropy Will Provide a Vigorous Agenda Aimed at Increasing Public and Private Investments in Black Communities

NEW YORK – April 10, 2018 – Over 250 Black leaders and professionals in philanthropy including presidents, trustees, program officers, donors and activists are expected to attend **ABFE’s “The Fierce Urgency of Now” 2018 Conference** on Saturday, April 14th – Tuesday, April 17th at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee. ***The Fierce Urgency of Now*** offers the best and most promising practices in the field of philanthropy to strengthen Black communities. This year, ABFE will offer attendees a set of informative workshops, plenaries and networking opportunities to increase the impact of their work.

Representatives of several organizations are confirmed to attend, including **Opal Tometi**, co-founder of #BlackLivesMatter and executive director of Black Alliance for Just Immigration; **Dr. Iva E. Carruthers**, general secretary of the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc.; **David J. Johns**, executive director of the National Black Justice Coalition; **Tynesha McHarris**, program officer for Novo Foundation’s Advancing Adolescent Girls’ Rights initiative; and **Andre Perry**, David M. Rubenstein Fellow in the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution and contributor on CNN.

In addition to thought-provoking plenaries and workshops, the conference makes space for recognizing important leaders for their work and contributions at the 27th James A. Joseph Lecture and Awards Program. President and CEO of the East Bay Community Foundation, James W. Head, will receive this year’s prestigious James A. Joseph Lecturer Awards; Senior Program Officer of The Pittsburgh Foundation, Michelle McMurray, will receive this year’s prestigious Emerging Leader in Philanthropy Awards; and, the Metro United Way of Louisville is set to receive this year’s Institutional Award for Philanthropic Leadership.

The theme: *The Fierce Urgency of Now* (inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s 1967 speech, “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence”) sets to create a sense of *urgency* on increasing public and private investments in Black communities. “The timing is critical to convene foundations and address how we can promote *effective* responsive philanthropy in Black communities,” said Susan Taylor Batten, ABFE’s President and CEO. ***The Fierce Urgency of Now*** will also call attention to investment strategies that build and protect Black institutional, political and economic power.

The four-day conference opens with a welcome reception at the National Civil Rights Museum, which will also serve as a moment of reflection for the 50th anniversary of MLK's assassination in Memphis. Additionally, special focus will be shed on the philanthropic challenges of Black Afro-Latinx and Afro-Caribbean communities in U.S. Territories Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands and how U.S.-based foundations can help support these vulnerable communities in the wake of the Hurricane Irma and Maria. ABFE's [Black Social Change Funders Network](#) (BSCFN) will update its members on the latest from funders who are investing in Black-led social change; and culminating the conference will be ABFE's annual Black Business Summit convening, which focuses on best practices in the field, uncovers research of what is working and develops collaborative approaches to maximize impact and scale of Black-owned businesses.

Special thanks to this year's sponsors of [ABFE's "The Fierce Urgency of Now" 2018 Conference](#):

Philanthropic Champion

- Casey Family Programs

Host City Champion

- Memphis Philanthropy

Trailblazer Champion

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation
- The Hyams Foundation

Responsive Champion

- The Kresge Foundation

Equity Champion

- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- The California Endowment
- The California Wellness Foundation
- Medtronic Foundation

Supporter Champion

- Lumina Foundation
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For a complete schedule, speakers and more, visit [ABFE-CONFERENCE.org](#). Conference attendees will have exclusive access to ABFE's conference app, powered by Whova. For ABFE news, events and more, follow us on Twitter at [@ABFE](#) (hashtag: [#ABFENOW2018](#)); on LinkedIn at [@ABFE](#); on Instagram at [@ABFEPhilanthropy](#); and like us on Facebook at [@ABFEPhilanthropy](#).

About ABFE:

ABFE is a membership-based philanthropic organization that advocates for responsive and transformative investments in Black communities. Partnering with foundations, nonprofits and individuals, ABFE provides its members with professional development and technical assistance resources that further the philanthropic sector's connection and responsiveness to issues of equality, diversity and inclusion. Established in 1971 as the Association of Black Foundation Executives, the all-volunteer organization was credited with many of philanthropy's early gains in diversity. It since has evolved into a fully staffed, influential network. In 2013, the organization shed its descriptor and adopted the simpler ABFE (ab-fee) to better reflect its broadening membership. For more information, visit [ABFE.org](#).

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