

Comcast, NBC Universal set to improve diversity recruitment

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The NAACP, National Urban League, and National Action Network announced an agreement with Comcast and NBC Universal to expand current diversity initiatives intended to increase diversity in a wide range of areas including programming and employment.

The Memorandum of Understanding, filed on December 17 with the Federal Communications Commission, creates initiatives to improve diversity in the areas of corporate governance, employment/workforce recruitment and retention, procurement, programming, and philanthropy and community investments.

“The NAACP stands with the National Urban League and the National Action Network in applauding Comcast and NBC Universal for committing to this memorandum of understanding,” stated NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. “This agreement demonstrates the power of partnership and collaboration. We look forward to working closely with Comcast and NBC Universal and commend them for their corporate leadership in embracing the rich diversity of our nation. Business models that incorporate the importance of diversity increase prosperity and strengthen our economy. Ultimately, we must work together to create one America.”

“This agreement represents a positive step in the right direction for the principle of diversity, inclusion and economic opportunity,” said Marc H. Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League. “We applaud Comcast and NBC Universal for its willingness to enter into written commitments toward the goal of building a first-class communications concern. We thank them for their insight and commitment.”

“This historic agreement is a template for how major corporations should commit to concrete ways they will make equity and fairness part of their business plan. This agreement supports workers, businesses, artists, and charities in our community. It is a major step toward changing the corporate culture in how it relates to our community and will help define 21st century Civil Rights,” stated National Action Network President Rev. Al Sharpton.

Highlights of Comcast and NBC Universal’s diversity commitments include:

Adding at least eight new independently owned and operated networks where minorities have substantial participation either through ownership or operational control will be launched.

Establishing a \$20 million venture capital fund intended to expand opportunities for minority entrepreneurs in the development of new digital media applications.

Creating Diversity Advisory Councils, including an African American Advisory Council, to facilitate open communication over the development, monitoring, and evaluation of diversity initiatives and to provide advice to senior executives.

Enhancing minority participation in news and public affairs programming.

Expanding investment priorities, including the building of tomorrow’s leaders, the expansion of digital literacy, and the promotion of community service.

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Increasing philanthropic efforts to African American led and African American-serving institutions.

"We are proud to partner with these outstanding leaders of the African American community on this Memorandum of Understanding," said David L. Cohen, Executive Vice President, Comcast Corporation. "This comprehensive commitment resulting from the Comcast NBC Universal transaction will bring key benefits in the areas of programming, investment and procurement. We look forward to continuing and deepening our relationships with these organizations and the broader African American community, as well as with other diverse communities with whom we are entering similar commitments."

"We are delighted to be working with the NAACP, the National Urban League and the National Action Network as we further our shared goal of diversity in both the workplace and in the media," commented Paula Madison, Executive Vice President, Diversity, NBC Universal. "We are also proud to be able to build on NBC Universal's considerable progress over the past few years, and to accelerate the momentum of our commitments to minority ownership, expanded diversity programs, philanthropic efforts targeting under-served and diverse communities, and diversity among our suppliers."