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IABPFF PRESIDENTS YEAR-END SUMMARY 2019 REPORT

To the Executive Board and members of the International Association of Black Professional Fire Fighters after three (3) years at the helm of this great association I have a unique view of this organization. With that insight I am compelled and encouraged to continue my work with members at all levels of the IABPFF in identifying our direction as an organization. The importance of our viability organizationally, politically, and to act on issues and initiatives right now is imperative.

In my humble opinion if we continue to focus on what we get for being a member in the IABPFF instead of what we give as members of the IABPFF we are not living up to what the founders and our constitution organized us for. We must live up to our constitution in reference to our mission statement, preamble and purpose, which is directly related to the bible and this scripture in Acts 20:35 “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus himself said: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

In this report I am going to focus on a direction that I hope inspires and motivate our members at every level to do more. If you are an elected member on the national, regional or local levels of this organization that took an oath to lead your specific area of responsibility your leadership in this organization is needed now more than ever.

IABPFF SUMMARY FROM January 2019 – December 2019

My travels for 2019 included the following;

In January and February I did not travel on behalf of the IABPFF due to the lack of funding, based on the financial loss of the 2018 convention. As a matter of fact after the end of the convention I suspended all travel utilizing IABPFF funds from our general revenue/operating budget until we received the dues collected for 2019. Any decision for anyone to travel would be on an as needed basis.

March 1 - 3 my EDI training partner and I was invited to instruct an assessment training process with the members of the DC, Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) area. Our feedback was that it was a successful class and throughout the year several of those in attendance were promoted. We always accept the fact and in our humble opinion we can enhance those that are familiar with the assessment center process and significantly help those that are being introduced to the process.

March 13 - 18 I traveled to Las Vegas for my annual golf event but while there I met with the IABPFF Treasurer, the chapter president of Las Vegas, the chapter president of Clark County, and the SWRD to discuss the 2019 convention and address business related to IABPFF business accounts.

March 29 – April 1 I was invited to attend the National Medical Associations 20th National Colloquium on African American Health on behalf of the IABPFF utilizing my personal funds for travel and they provided the lodging. I discussed the issues of cancer and the increasing issue of suicides among firefighter/EMS workers as it relates to us. There were other topics discussed but a few caught my undivided attention 1) The maternal morbidity & mortality and the disparity of how it impacts African American/Black women. 2) The Healthcare Outlook for the 116th Congress and how they are organizing their issues politically that are impacting African Americans and developing a Legislative toolkit to take those issue to Capitol Hill, like what we do with the IABPFF Day on the Hill. 3) April Ryan, White House Correspondent & Washington DC Bureau Chief gave a keynote address about Race and the Political Landscape: Growing Concerns for Black America which should frighten us but inspire us to be more politically active in this current state of conditions directly related to the election of the President of the United States aka the Trump Effect.

April 17 & 18 I traveled to the Vision 20/20 Smoke Alarm Summit at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Baltimore, MD of which going back to the Brewington administration we have had a seat on their board since. This meeting focused on three objectives; 1) Policy and practice interventions that will increase the installation and maintenance of smoke alarms in all homes in the United States. 2) High priority research gaps that need to be addressed; and 3) Next steps to ensure that the findings from this meeting inform policy and practice to reduce the number of people who are dying in home fires where there are no working smoke alarms. This group also developed the National Community Risk Reduction Advocacy Plan. We have been working with several national groups in this relationship to changing the culture of the fire service from just fire prevention to community risk reduction as it relates to diabetes testing, high blood pressure checks, how to obtain city support or resources, smoke detectors etc. and bring all of those disciplines to the home instead of us just installing smoke detectors.

April 24 - 27 a few of us attended the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) and our IABPFF Day on the Hill. We also attended the Annual CFSI Dinner and Awards program. During the week we walked the halls of congress to support fire and emergency services legislation that the CFSI Advisory committee have developed through its membership to present to our congressional leaders. This year the IABPFF focused on recruitment, hiring and the retention of Blacks/African Americans in the fire service. The IABPFF also has a seat on the CFSI Advisory Committee and to maintain our seat we purchase a table to the annual dinner. Throughout the year our Legislative Liaison attends the meetings on my behalf.

In the beginning of May I had to take care of some personal business that conflicted with me being able to attend the NCR and SER Spring meetings. I did attend the SCR meeting in Houston, May 15 – 18.

May 30 – June 2 we held the IABPFF Retreat where we discussed the IABPFF Strategic Plan that we developed in December related to Recruitment, Retention and Promotion. We also reviewed plans for the 2019 convention and addressed several other items related to the IABPFF. We followed a detailed agenda for the retreat.

June 2 – 7 I met with Dave Washington of the Carl Holmes Executive Development Institute (EDI) to discuss how we can collaborate with each other. We have agreed that at EDI in 2020 we will set up a process to give IABPFF information to everyone that attends EDI and give them the opportunity to join the IABPFF. In turn we will allow EDI to recruit at our national meetings. This is not in an MOU we just agreed to do it no strings attached, and our word is our bond.

June 24 – 29 I attended the BCOC Annual Dr. Oliver Jones, Jr. & Dr. Michael Randolph Educational Symposium. We continued the discussion on membership, collaboration and providing educational opportunities at IABPFF conventions and conferences.

August 2 – 11 IABPFF Executive Council Meeting. Our goal for the convention in 2019 was to get at least 60 members from each region to attend the convention in Las Vegas for this Executive Council meeting, unfortunately we fell way short of that goal. We worked on implementing our IABPFF Strategic Plan which will focus on recruitment, training, and upward mobility in the fire service. We will also continue to focus on chapter development, our committee's functionality, and the marketing of our organization that brings positive attention and potential funding sources to support our conventions/executive council meetings in the future. At our convention we had an Executive Council style meeting that focused on chapter president's perspective where we formed leaderless groups to discuss the following overview concepts related to Membership, Upward Mobility, Recruitment and Training. Our members that participated in these working groups were charged with updating our current strategic plans to include their views on what they determined to be included in those strategies.

September 11 - 14 on behalf of the IABPFF I attended the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Caucus (CBC/ALC) where we attended several seminars, worked to maintain relationships with members of congress, and networked with several business leaders to support our mission in the IABPFF.

December 13 & 14 on behalf of the IABPFF I attended the Institute of The Black World 21st Century / Black Family Summit Annual Retreat held in Baltimore, MD. Their agenda touched on several topics about the Census and the Black Community, Black Civic Engagement/Voting Is Not An Option in 2020, The Movement and Voices for Reparations Now, and Confronting Injustice: Transformative Policies And Programs That Support Black Families and Communities. I gave a report/synopsis of our challenges related to recruitment, retention, hiring and some of the things we are doing to address them.

Expectations and needs to fulfill for 2020

My expectations for this organization have not changed, we need the average non-participating member to volunteer and be responsible for working on a regional/local committee. In addition we need to reach out to every person in or out of the fire service and collaborate with them to help us recruit, retain, train and support each member in being upwardly mobile. These basic things must happen if members feel that they don't have a voice in the operations of the IABPFF.

I have identified four initiatives that I feel we should consider as an organizational goal in 2020; 1) The development of a major fundraiser to support the IABPFF Strategic Plan that includes our Recruitment Strategic Plan, IABPFF Cadet programs, and IABPFF Training programs. 2) The development of an IABPFF Fire Institute to support conventions with transportation, lodging, training, and any funding required to host a convention, etc. 3) The development of a campaign to identify and support Cadet programs across the IABPFF based on and starting with current plans (Cadet Programs) that are working. 4) The development of Incident Management Teams (IMT's) to work for FEMA during disasters, to support IABPFF events, and support fire service members during disasters. Let's be clear whether it is these initiatives or not we have to develop new ideas to make the IABPFF viable in this changing fire service and organizational environment to appeal to all our members interested in the goal of serving our communities and members. Finally we must develop a proposal, plan and budget to achieve each of these initiatives.

As a National organization we must have a strong voice politically, the 2020 elections are just around the corner and we must be organized across the country to determine how politics will impact our communities and our organization directly. There are some basic things that we can do to address what we should be doing politically for example; 1) Who have we recently endorsed or supported locally, statewide & nationally and develop a database of those candidates. 2) What do we want politically better healthcare, pension system protections, better schools etc. and put this information in a position paper and take it to our national candidates for every office to determine who can better serve our interest. 3) Who are we going to endorse/support for President of the United States and what do we expect them to do for us. For our political voice to be heard nationally we must have input, coordination and participation from our members from across the country to achieve this as a political goal and for it to work.

Finally, we need all our IABPFF members to be engaged now more than ever before. We all must hold ourselves accountable including our volunteers over committees. We must reach out to our nonparticipating members at every level (nationally, regionally & locally) of this organization to get them involved in the IABPFF. We must address all issues that are impacting our ability to be viable on every level of the IABPFF, yet we must agree to disagree and then move on/forward. We don't have the luxury to remain divided over any issues whether they are personal or organizational.

I will close with this; we have an opportunity to make the IABPFF better this year than it was last year. It will not happen if I can't get your help! We need your input to change the IABPFF to be what we want it to be, if we want to exist and continue our fight for justice.

For "All that I am I owe, I live eternally in the **RED!**" **KEEP THE FIRES BURNING FOR JUSTICE!**

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns about anything in this summary or any other issues related to the IABPFF, please call or email me.

Sincerely,

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