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**INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP CEO JILL JOHNSON WILL MODERATE
CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS ISSUE FORUM ON STATE OF BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES**

*Jill Johnson Is A Nationally-Recognized Small Business Champion & Inclusion Advocate On A
Mission To Make The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem More Equitable*

Newark, NJ, September 26, 2022 — The [Institute For Entrepreneurial Leadership](#) announced today that CEO Jill Johnson will moderate a panel for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Issue Forum - 8th Annual State Of African-American Small Businesses: Activating The Black Commufirms and funders who seem to merely talk about diversity, but do nothing to include Black-owned businesses in final selections for seed capital. Systemic reform and policy changes are needed to make an impact, so that equity and inclusion are more than just buzzwords in a public relations strategy.”

Jill Johnson is a nationally-recognized thought leader and trailblazer working to foster an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem for people from historically excluded populations. Earning a B.A. in economics from Harvard University, Johnson started her career in the financial analyst program in mergers and acquisitions at Goldman, Sachs & Co. and moved on to hold leadership positions in her family’s business, City News Publishing Company. She co-founded the [Institute For Entrepreneurial Leadership](#) (IFEL) in 2002 and serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the nonprofit organization. Now in its twentieth year, IFEL leverages the power of relationship capital to create pathways to success for Black and Latinx founders, entrepreneurs and small business owners.

An expert in business strategy and a fierce champion for inclusion, Johnson has spearheaded innovative programming to address the systemic barriers faced by entrepreneurs of color under IFEL’s three program focus areas: The [Women of Color Connecting](#) initiative leverages the power of relationship capital and works to build the

capacity of Women of Color entrepreneurs, placing them on the grow-scale-exit trajectory; The [Making of Black Angels](#) movement drives diversity and inclusion within the angel investing sector and seeks to increase the number of Black angel investors; and, [Small Businesses Need Us](#), started in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, engages a volunteer corps of business professionals ready to help small businesses navigate the hardships of being under-resourced. nity To Build Up Black Entrepreneurs on September 30 in Washington, D.C. Hosted by Congressman Donald M. Payne, Jr., the forum will highlight the journeys of several entrepreneurs and discuss strategies and models for building entrepreneurial wealth and removing obstacles for access to capital.

The mission of the [Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.](#) (CBCF) is to advance the global Black community by developing leaders, informing policy, and educating the public. The panel is part of the CBCF Annual Legislative Conference being held September 28-October 2. Registration is available on the [Annual Legislative Conference website](#).

Capital constraint remains a significant barrier for Black founders, as startup capital investment is scarce. In 2021, Black founders received only 1.2% of the record \$147 billion in venture capital invested in U.S. startups through the first half of the year.

IFEL CEO & Co-Founder, Jill Johnson, stated, “While progress has been made, the fact that it’s still necessary to have conversations about Black-owned businesses and their financial viability is evidence that the fight for equal access is far from over. Black businesses continue to work harder to prove they are investment-worthy, facing barriers from banks, investment

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

The Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership (IFEL) is an independent, nonprofit organization that leverages the power of relationship capital to create pathways to success for Black and Latinx entrepreneurs and small business owners. Founded in 2002, IFEL’s mission is to eradicate the systemic barriers that prevent people from historically excluded populations from being able to access the knowledge, networks, and capital required for entrepreneurial success and wealth creation. Learn more at www.weareifel.org.