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NMFI Selects 50 Top Franchises for Minorities

**By Everett Wallace & Christine Kimmel
National Minority Franchise Initiative**

While minorities make up roughly 35% of the total U.S. population, recent surveys indicate they make up 6-9% of franchisees. To take advantage of this 25% gap, many franchisors have established programs designed to aggressively attract minorities into their systems. While current racial and ethnic under-representation presents a significant window of opportunity for qualified minorities, the question remains which of the actively recruiting franchisors should prospective minority franchisees approach?

The National Minority Franchising Initiative was conceived in 1999 with the sole objective of increasing the number of minorities in franchising. In the spirit of its original charter, the NMFI has selected 50 outstanding franchisors that have demonstrated an exceptional focus on recruiting and supporting minority franchisees. Selection was based on many factors, including historical performance, brand identification, market dynamics, franchisee satisfaction, the level of initial training, on-going support and financial stability. More importantly, selection was based on the results of a detailed questionnaire that focused on the minority make-up of the existing franchisee base and at the senior management level within the franchisor itself, and current incentive programs offered to minority franchisees.

When asked about specific motivations they had for recruiting minority franchisees, selected franchisors had plenty to say.

At Papa John's we "seek to recruit more minority franchisees to more closely reflect the growing diversity of the U.S., and to benefit from the added level of insight and energy that results from having a diverse group of franchisees," notes Thomas

Flaherty, VP of New Business Development. He affirms that "these efforts have helped [Papa John's] grow its number of minority franchisees to an estimated 20% of the system."

Carvel's Steve Romaniello is similarly enthusiastic about recruiting minority franchisees. "We believe diversity throughout our company is a business imperative - how can we connect with an increasingly diverse consumer base without the key insights of diverse employees and franchisees?" he asks. "Our diversity outreach program combines unique financial incentives with specialized support for this target audience and we plan to expand to additional markets in 2008."

According to Brenda W. Casserly, President/CEO of ERA Franchise Systems, "Diversity is one of the greatest sources of strength in our country, and one of our industry's greatest resources for continued growth and success." Casserly emphasizes that "ERA Real Estate is committed to providing support and tools to every affiliate within this emerging market."

"Diversity within the system will help the system grow stronger, as diverse perspectives breed new and fresh ideas that will propel our growth," explains Brian Spindel of PostNet. We value the minority market and have "taken the steps to proactively put PostNet on the radar for minorities and minority groups interested in franchising."

Franchising offers tremendous opportunities at all investment levels," adds a Jani-King representative, "we continue to increase our strong base of minority franchise owners by offering a wide range of investment plans that include financing, training and ongoing support."

Nikki Sells of Express Personnel avows that, in the staffing industry, diversity is especially important. "Franchisees must understand the cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of the workers and businesses in their communities," she states.

According to Susan

Goodell of The Athlete's Foot there is much to be gained in taking advantage of the diversity in a minority market. "The value of operating in these underserved communities is twofold. The franchisor benefits from the expansion of the brand. The franchisee realizes the benefits of operating a local business backed by the expertise and resources of a global company. In addition to realizing his or her success, benefits may include rejuvenation of neighborhoods, employment opportunities for local citizens and investment opportunities."

Keep in mind that purchasing a franchise is a time-tested, paint-by-the-numbers method of starting a new business that avoids many of the myriad pitfalls encountered by someone starting anew and vastly improves the odds of success. If the evaluation and investment decision is sloppy or haphazard, you can potentially lose your original investment plus any assets used to personally secure your debt.

Two factors that weigh heavily on your ultimate success as a franchisee are; the homework you do at the front-end to select the optimal franchise for your particular needs, experience and financial resources, and second your commitment to work hard and play by the rules once you have signed a binding, long-term franchise agreement. A franchise system is only as good as you make it - in most cases, it involves hard work and requires you to be a team player within the system rather than a lone entrepreneur.

The following list of 50 Top Franchises for Minorities developed by NMFI is offered as good starting point in your search for an optimal franchise for your needs. For more information on franchises actively seeking minority franchisees, please visit www.minorityfranchising.com, or order the 2006 Minority Franchise Guide at sourcebookpublications.com. Both list detailed profiles on over 500 companies actively recruiting and supporting minorities.

50 TOP FRANCHISES FOR MINORITIES

| COMPANY | INTERNET |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ATHLETE'S FOOT, THE | www.theathletesfoot.com |
| BONUS BUILDING CARE | www.bonusbuildingcare.com |
| BUDGET BLINDS | www.budgetblinds.com |
| BURGER KING @ CORPORATION | www.burgerking.com |
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| CARLSON HOTELS WORLDWIDE @ | www.carlson.com |
| CARVEL CORPORATION | www.carvel.com |
| CENTURY 21 REAL ESTATE | www.century21.com |
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| DOMINO'S PIZZA | www.dominos.com |
| ERA FRANCHISE SYSTEMS | www.era.com |
| EXPRESS PERSONNEL SERVICES | www.expressfranchising.com |
| FAMOUS FAMIGLIA | www.famousfamiglia.com |
| FANTASTIC SAMS | www.fantasticsamsfranchises.com |
| FASTSIGNS INTERNATIONAL | www.franchise.fastsigns.com/ |
| HOME HELPERS | www.homehelpers.cc |
| HONEY BAKED HAM CO. & CAFÉ | www.honeybakedonline.com |
| HUNTINGTON LEARNING CENTER | www.huntingtonfranchise.com |
| IHG (INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS GROUP) | www.ihcgroup.com |
| INSTANT TAX SERVICE | www.instanttaxservice.com |
| JANI-KING INTERNATIONAL | www.janiking.com |
| JAN-PRO CLEANING SYSTEMS | www.jan-pro.com |
| JIFFY LUBE INTERNATIONAL | www.jiffylube.com |
| KFC | www.yumfranchises.com |
| LAWN DOCTOR | www.lawndoctor.com |
| LIBERTY TAX SERVICE | www.libertytaxfranchise.com |
| LINK STAFFING SERVICES | www.linkstaffing.com |
| LITTLE CAESARS | www.littlecaesars.com |
| MAID BRIGADE SERVICES | www.maidbrigade.com |
| MAID TO PERFECTION | www.maidtoperfectioncorp.com |
| MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL | www.marriottdevelopment.com |
| MCDONALD'S | www.mcdonalds.com |
| MEINEKE CAR CARE CENTERS | www.meinekefranchise.com |
| MONEY MAILER | www.moneymailer.com |
| MORE SPACE PLACE | www.morespaceplace.com |
| MOTEL 6 | www.motel6.com |
| MR. APPLIANCE CORPORATION | www.servicefranchiseopportunities.com |
| MR. ROOTER CORP. | www.servicefranchiseopportunities.com |
| PAPA JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL | www.papajohns.com |
| PIZZA PATRON | www.pizzapatron.com |
| POSTNET | www.postnet.com |
| RE/MAX INTERNATIONAL | www.remax.com |
| SCHLOTZSKY'S | www.schlotzskys.com |
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Gina Moughty
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