

# AHBAI/AOIP.....(Continued from page 20.)

Located in Shreveport, Louisiana, L & M Products is the only firm in the state engaged in production of Black hair care products on a full scale basis.

**C**HARLES BROWN is president of *Sir Charles, Inc.*, the company which he founded in Chicago, Illinois in 1972. The Sir Charles line of hair care products is sold exclusively in the United States.

Very active in the community, Sir Charles, Inc. is a strong supporter of the Black on Black Love campaign in Chicago. Of the Institute, Brown says, "AHBAI represents unity among Black manufacturers in the market place to gain better leverage for marketing our products."



Wesley Wilborn, M.D., President  
W & W PHARMACEUTICALS



Frank Davie, President  
WORLDS OF CURLS

decade]," Lafayette Jones says. "I'm talking about Black companies making somewhere between \$100 to \$200 million a year. However, the only way this is going to happen for many of them is via massive community-based support which only could come from a broad-based community-building coalition such as AOIP."

Three of the member companies of AHBAI rank among the 20 biggest Black businesses in the United States with annual gross income in excess of \$157 million. Soft Sheen Products, Inc. grossed over \$64 million as the 8th largest Black company; M & M Products, Inc. was the 11th largest with more than \$47 million; and Johnson Products, Inc. ranked 12th with nearly \$41 million.

George E. Johnson, president of Johnson Products and chairman emeritus of AHBAI, summarized the benefits of membership in the Institute when he said:

"The Institute provides us with a rich opportunity to enhance the stature of our industry, to better educate our consumers and to enhance the profitability of our member companies. We have an exciting agenda and there is no scarcity of plans or of ideas to pursue. Together, we have the commitment and most of the resources necessary to fulfill our mission. The major ingredient we truly need is Black community awareness of our importance in an overall community-building focus like that of AOIP."

Gilbert Francis of the National Pan-Hellenic Council says, "Simply supporting these Black-owned suppliers where their products are available is not nearly enough. We must insist that every appropriate retail establishment in which we buy has these items in prominent display and adequate supply. If they refuse to accommodate our Black supplier needs even for one justifiable item, we should let them know our dollars will be spent where we can get cooperation."

According to Carrie Ayers Haynes of Delta Sigma Theta and "Mother" of AOIP's proven-to-be-successful image-building and motivational approach, "It

is essential that much of the AHBAI member firms' dollars targeted for job training be channelled into programs which focus on retraining functionally-illiterate persons who are the prime targets of AOIP. Also, as a means of enabling our functionally-illiterate population to feel good enough about "Blackness" to want to learn, we have no choice other than to support these Black-owned companies in a priority way. This helps them provide hope for others."

According to Faye Bryant, National President of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., "We are going to support AHBAI's 'Black on Black Love' campaign because it is essential. However, the Black community leadership needs an unquestionable commitment also from AHBAI that they will work with us in our overall community-building focus."

## The Future Of AHBAI With AOIP

**T**HE national Assault On Illiteracy Program (AOIP) is a community-building framework via which Black-led organizations can work together to focus on greatly reducing the unconscionably-high rate of illiteracy among Black Americans. "Functional illiteracy" ensnares and keeps from being employable almost half (47%) of Black adults, age 18 and older. AOIP is a proven-productive motivational approach that is supported by more than 80 national organizations and many Black newspaper publishers.

An integral part of the structure of AOIP is the Black Business and Professional Support and Involvement Committee, which is headed by Frankie Gillette of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs. Assisting her in a supportive role is Evelyn Peevy, national president of Iota Phi Lambda Sorority Inc. This committee has its focus on all the tenets surrounding our community-building needs for supporting all Black businesses and professionals.

According to Thomas Dortch, national chairperson of the Council of National Alumni Associations and Chairman of AOIP's Public Information Committee, "Members of AOIP participating organizations are urged to support Black businesses and professionals. Black businesses in our communities are urged to use Black suppliers and Black employees. Space is made available by participating newspapers for a weekly listing of Black businesses and professionals who, in turn, are active in (and full local supporters of) AOIP...and this support means with advertising and in every other possible manner."

According to Charles Teamer, national president of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and member of AOIP's national executive committee, "The long-standing and deliberate denial of the right of Black Americans to compete in business has much to do today with the lack of motivation of talented Blacks to enter the business world. Thus, we not only have to honor those pioneers who have struggled against the odds to achieve...but also we must support them and—at the same time—encourage many, many more to enter the business community." A business entrepreneur himself, Charles Teamer went on to say, "Not only is Alpha Phi Alpha totally behind AOIP...but also our fraternity is going to take a leadership role in developing ways our entire organization can support these hair care makers and other deserving Black-owned businesses in an ongoing way."

By providing jobs and by supporting other Black businesses and professionals, AHBAI not only is adhering to the tenets of AOIP...but also now is a full member of AOIP (its newest member organization). The reinvestment activities of AHBAI member companies are classic examples of AOIP's community-building thrust. One of AHBAI's stated objectives is "to contribute to business development, economic, progress and social growth" in the Black community. By joining forces with AOIP the goal of "economic and educational advancement within Black America" will be more rapidly achieved.

"In exchange for no-cost editorial publicity in AOIP-participating newspapers and cooperating magazines like *Metro*, the *Black Collegian* and others, member companies of AHBAI can," according to Calvin W. Rolark, Chairman of *The BMI Cooperative*, "place their advertising in AOIP-cooperating media in a priority way, help identify new funding resources in the corporate world and determine new marketing techniques to help AOIP."



## The Future Of AHBAI Itself

**W**ITH the current annual rate of growth of 15 percent or better, the future of Black companies in the health and beauty aids industry seem to look excellent. "I'd like to predict that we're going to see some megagiants [within this