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February 23, 2026

Legislator Manuel Abarca
Jackson County

Dear Chairman, Abarca:

Please join us for the 68th Annual Difference Maker Awards Luncheon on Thursday, March 19, 2026, from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., backstage at Starlight Theatre. We are proud to announce our 2026 Difference Makers, Bridgette Williams, Executive Director and CEO of the Heavy Constructors Association, and Rev. Al Sharpton, internationally- renowned civil rights leader and Founder and President of the National Action Network (NAN).

A nationally respected leader in workforce development and equity in the construction industry, Ms. Williams has dedicated her career to expanding access, opportunity, and representation in one of the region's most critical economic sectors. Her leadership has strengthened pathways to good-paying jobs while challenging long-standing barriers that have excluded Black workers and businesses from full participation in the industry.

Rev. Sharpton has devoted decades of his life to the fight for civil rights, justice, and equality, transforming the power of protest and dissent into meaningful policy and legislative change impacting millions of lives. Often described as a "voice for the voiceless," Rev. Sharpton has been a central figure in the modern civil rights movement, consistently standing at the intersection of advocacy, accountability, and public policy. His leadership through the National Action Network, with more than 100 chapters nationwide, and his national media platforms have amplified issues of racial justice, police accountability, and economic equity nationwide.

This year's luncheon theme, "Democracy Under Siege: Radical Resistance Required," will set the stage for a profound Fireside Chat conversation. This in-depth discussion, featuring Rev. Al Sharpton, will explore the urgent threats facing our democracy and the responsibility of courageous, people-centered leadership to confront systemic injustice, restore public trust, and advance equity in communities nationwide. Drawing on his lived experiences and national leadership, Rev. Sharpton will share insights on governing with integrity, centering community voices, and resisting policies that undermine democratic values and human dignity.

Event sponsors will receive recognition as key supporters of the Urban League's mission to enable African Americans and other disadvantaged populations to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights. We encourage you to complete and return the attached sponsorship commitment form today. For questions or additional information, please contact: Taneisa Blue at tblue@ulkc.org.

Thank you in advance for your generous support of \$5,000 to the Urban League of Greater Kansas City. We look forward to welcoming you to the 68th Annual Difference Maker Awards Luncheon as we come together to celebrate and honor these extraordinary leaders

Joe Davis Board Chair

Joe Davis, Board Chair
Gwendolyn Grant, President and CEO