



PRESENTED BY



41st BBPA HARRY JEROME AWARDS

OFFICIAL MEDIA KIT



ABOUT THE BBPA



HISTORY OF BBPA

Denham Jolly had a vision that there should be a community group that serves the purpose of the Black community. He called a meeting and invited leaders from the community to discuss how they could collectively support Black businesses.

On October 21, 1982, several members of the Black Community gathered for a meeting at the Underground Railroad restaurant in downtown Toronto. Among the attendees were attorney Romain Pitt, who made the opening remarks; Al Hamilton, publisher of Contrast Newspaper; and Bromley Armstrong, a community activist who helped lobby the Ontario government to pass anti-discrimination laws.

At that meeting, the attendees made the decision to form an association for the purpose of advocating on behalf of Black businesses and to showcase the much-maligned Black community. The name was instated as the "Black Business and Professional Association" (BBPA) as a statement of the organization's commitment to equity.

Following the October 1982 meeting, the association chose to honour the six Black Canadian athletes who excelled at that year's Commonwealth Games: Angela Taylor-Issanjenko, Ben Johnson, Mark McKoy, Milt Ottey, Tony Sharpe and Desai Williams. A dinner was suggested at which Harry Jerome, Canada's premiere track and field athlete of the 1960s would be invited to be the keynote speech. But before the plans could be finalized, Harry Jerome died suddenly in December 1982.



HISTORY OF BBPA

The event became a tribute to Harry Jerome and an awards ceremony to honour the six athletes. Thus, the first Harry Jerome Awards was held on March 5, 1983. Four decades later, the Harry Jerome Awards has grown into a national event that recognizes and honours excellence in Black Canadian achievement. In July 1983, the Black Business and Professional Association was incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization, with a mandate to address equity and opportunity for the Black community in business, employment, education and economic development

The first directors of the BBPA were Pamela Appelt, Bromley Armstrong, Jean Augustine, Jean Gammage (Kamala-Jean Gopie), Al Hamilton, Denham Jolly and Cynthia Reyes. Denham Jolly, whose vision gave birth to the BBPA, was elected our first president.

In addition to the Harry Jerome Awards, the BBPA sponsors the BBPA National Scholarship Fund, providing financial support to Black Canadian youth who pursue higher education. The Harry Jerome Scholarship Program (now the BBPA National Scholarships) was originally proposed by Hamlin Grange and realized through the efforts of Kamala-Jean Gopie, Pamela Appelt, Sheila Simpson, Beverly Mascoll and BBPA president Cynthia Reyes. Under the leadership of Verlyn Francis, the scholarship fund established an endowment fund and established corporate sponsorship in 1996. Today, the fund awards upwards of 30 scholarships each year.



THE BBPA BOARD



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CEO - Nadine Spencer



Nadine Spencer is the Interim CEO of the Black Business and Professional Association (BBPA), leading the organization's efforts to advance Canada's Black community through equity and programming initiatives. She is also the Founder of BrandEQ, a global agency specializing in social change marketing, communications, and public relations. Nadine pioneered BrandEQ Black, which examines racial biases in advertising and marketing. She is a dedicated Black community champion who has devoted her life to fighting discrimination, battling poverty, advancing women's education, and advocating for equality for women and girls of color. Nadine has received numerous accolades, including the Harry Jerome Business Award, the United Nations Volunteer Award, and was named CGA Businesswoman of the Year in 2020.

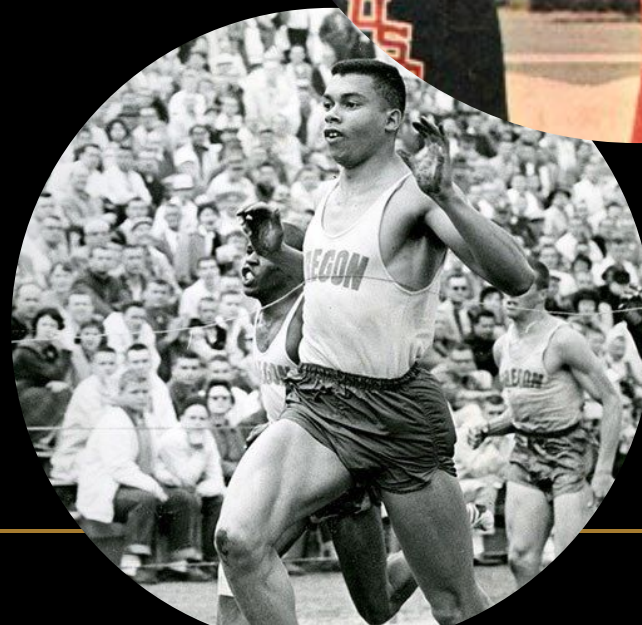
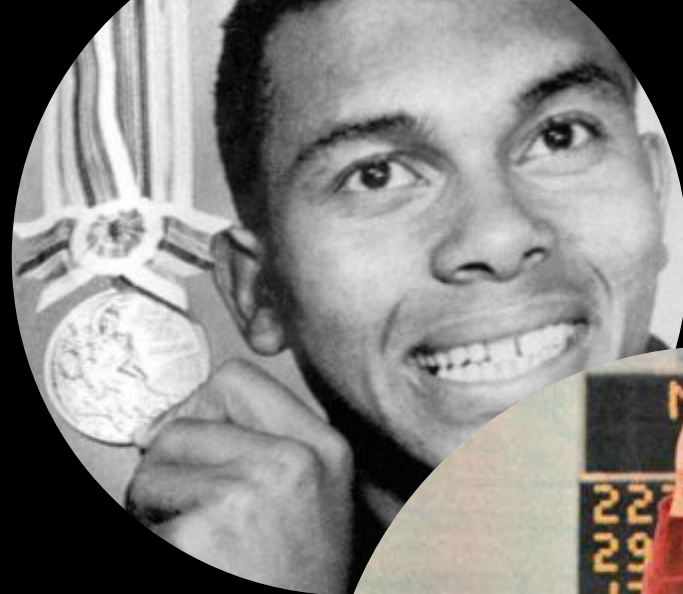
CHAIR - Ross Cadastre



Ross is an accomplished recruitment executive and the Chair of the board at BBPA. His early experience included working in family-owned businesses in St Lucia. Ross has since founded ITS Global in 2017, a talent solutions company, and has worked in small to large global and multi-national organizations. He has been recognized as a strategic change agent, accelerating growth in organizations. Ross is also an active community member and has served on several organizations. He is an ambitious and charismatic leader, bringing energy, knowledge, and commitment to every initiative he is involved in. Ross lives by Barack Obama's quote "A change is brought about because ordinary people do extraordinary things." He currently resides in Ajax ON with his wife and three children.



ABOUT HARRY JEROME



ABOUT HARRY JEROME

Henry “Harry” Winston Jerome, OC (September 30, 1940 - December 7, 1982) was a Canadian track and field runner and Olympic athlete. He was the grandson of John Howard, a railway porter who represented Canada in the 1912 Summer Olympics.

Born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Harry Jerome moved to North Vancouver at age 12. In 1970, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. He died of a brain aneurysm in December 1982, at the age of 42. His sister, Valerie Jerome, was also an Olympian who competed for Canada at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome.

Jerome competed at the university level for Bill Bowerman at the University of Oregon. He also competed for Canada in the 1960, 1964 and 1968 Summer Olympics, winning the 100-metre bronze in 1964. He also won gold in the 1966 British Empire and Commonwealth Games and the completing the 100 metres in 10.2, 10.1 and finally 10.0 seconds in 1960, tying a record established a month earlier by Germany's Armin Hary. He later set the world record for the 100-yard dash at 9.2 seconds, making Jerome one of only a few athletes to own both the 100-yard and 100-metre world record simultaneously. He was a member of the University of Oregon's 4 x 100 m relay team that tied the world record of 40.0 seconds in 1962. In 1966, he again tied a world record with a 9.1-second time in the 100-yard dash. From 1963 to 1966, he held or equaled four world records concurrently. He continued to sprint successfully until late 1960s, despite suffering an injury so severe at the Perth Commonwealth Games in 1962 that doctors believed he would never walk again.

Jerome earned a master's degree in physical education from the University of Oregon. After retiring from the athletics in 1969, he was invited by the Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau to help create Canada's new Ministry of Sport. He held a number of senior positions in the ministry but resigned over the government's cancellation of a large-scale public-private partnership he had negotiated with Kellogg's to promote youth participation in athletics.

During the 1980s, Jerome headed the Premier's Sport Award program in British Columbia, Canada.

The Stanley Park seawall in his native Vancouver is graced with a 9-foot bronze statue of Jerome. The annual Harry Jerome Awards, the national awards dinner for Canada's Black community organized by the Black Business and Professional Association (BBPA), is named after him. He was named an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1970 and inducted into the Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 1971. In 2001, he was inducted into Canada's Walk of Fame and in 2010 he was named a Person of National Historical Significance.

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The 2023 Honourees

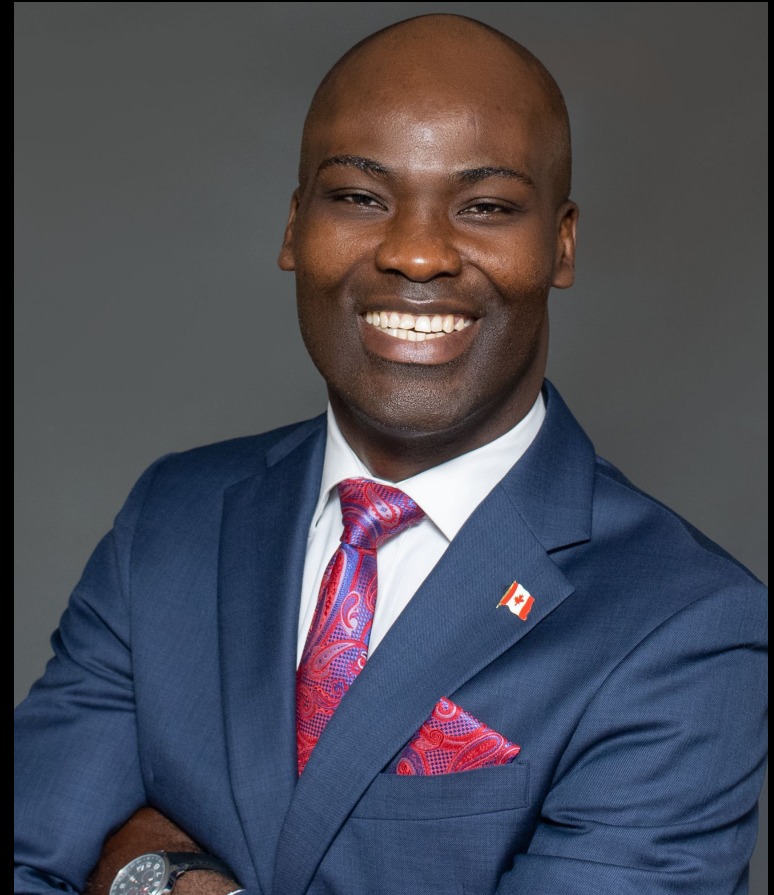


Young Entrepreneur Award

Agunbiade Seun Richards

Agunbiade Seun Richards is a social entrepreneur, researcher, and community servant committed to creative thinking, cognitive learning, and volunteering. They have lived and worked in three continents, visited over 25 countries, and have friends from over 100 nations. They started their career in accounting and actuarial science before transitioning to technology sales for Fortune 500 companies. In 2019, they pursued their passion for creating solutions for global communities through education and entrepreneurship.

They have received numerous awards and recognitions for their work in championing diversity and inclusion and have also been recognized as an emerging innovator and business personality of the year. They aspire to teach as a university lecturer while investing in impactful startups and inspiring a younger generation of entrepreneurial leaders for global impact. Their interests include community development, education, entrepreneurship, and technology.





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Arts Award

Ngozi Paul

Ngozi Paul is an award-winning stage and screen actress, writer, director, and producer. Born and raised in Toronto to Pan-African parents from the Caribbean islands, her upbringing created the foundation for her work as a social and cultural innovator. With academic roots in the prestigious Birmingham Conservatory for Classical Theatre, Ngozi began her acting career on stage at the Stratford Festival of Canada.

Following the groundbreaking and successful run of the theatre production 'da Kink in My Hair, Ngozi co-created, executive produced, and starred in the television series of the same name. Most recently, she wrote and starred in the play The Emancipation of Ms. Lovely, which was nominated for six Dora Awards and won Outstanding New Play, and appeared in the Netflix miniseries Self Made: Inspired by the Life of Madam C.J. Walker.



Lifetime Achievement Award

Spider "Chuck" Jones

An award winning journalist in both the music and boxing fields, Jones is a three time former amateur Golden Glove Champion and was inducted into the Canadian Boxing Hall of fame in 1996. Spider was recently voted "Boxing Commentator and M.C. of the Year" by the Board of Governors for the World Boxing Federation.

Spider is also a highly popular motivational speaker who is much admired for his diligent work among the youth. His inspirational life story "Out of the Darkness" reveals his amazing rise from the impoverished, gang infested, inner-city projects of Detroit and Windsor and how, as a grade five dropout, he eventually returned to school at the age of thirty to become an honour student. Spider's favourite thing is talking to his Nighthawks, whether it be about sports, entertainment, or hot issues.





Jerome Family Athletics Award

Lindell Wigginton

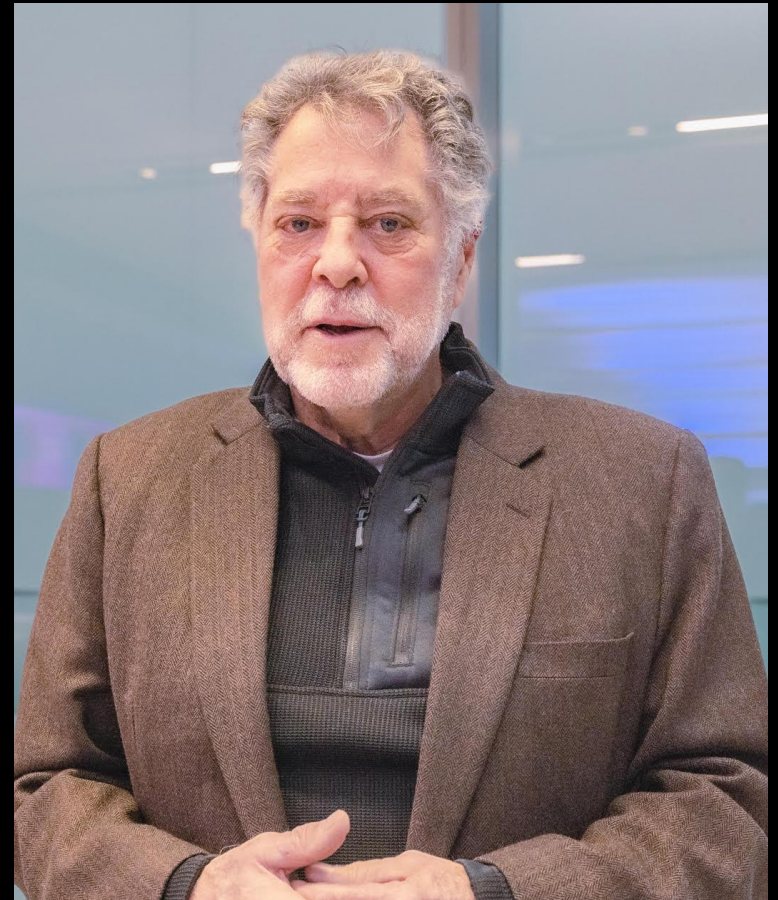
Lindell Shamar Wigginton (born March 28, 1998) is a Canadian professional basketball player for the Milwaukee Bucks of the National Basketball Association (NBA), on a two-way contract with the Wisconsin Herd of the NBA G League. He played college basketball for the Iowa State Cyclones



President's Award

Rick Gosling

Rick Gosling, a social worker and theologian, founded The Children's Breakfast Club in 1984 with the objective of providing healthy breakfasts to children from working mother-led families in Toronto's Jane and Falstaff area. The program has grown rapidly to serve up to 60 children per day, five days per week, and is still volunteer and privately funded, with \$0.87 of every dollar going directly to feeding children. The organization has also expanded its operations to rural communities beyond the Greater Toronto Area, providing food, winter coats, gently used toys, and sports equipment to underprivileged children.





Leadership Award

Rosemarie Powell

Rosemarie Powell is a passionate advocate for social, economic and environmental justice. She has led for over 20 years from the grassroots up, managing and developing several innovative and impactful community programs and services to support under-represented group's access to the labour market. Her community engagement work in Jane Finch earned several awards for leadership and imagination. Rosemarie is currently the Executive Director of the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN).

The Toronto Community Benefits Network, is a community/labour coalition of over 120 member organizations which initiated successful Community Benefits Agreements for the Eglinton Crosstown and Finch West LRT transit projects, West Park Healthcare Centre and Woodbine Casino expansion.





TD

Professional Excellence Award

Emma Todd

Emma is the CEO of MMH Technology Group, a company that specializes in Data Systems, Blockchain Consulting, Communication, and Events for emerging technology organizations. She is an esteemed member of the Canadian Blockchain Consortium and serves as Chair of the Mining Committee and a board member. Emma is also the Chair for Girls In Tech, advocating for women's representation in the industry. Notably, Emma has achieved a significant milestone by joining the board of Tokens.com, making her one of the 7% of women of color on a publicly traded board.

She has received various accolades, including being named Crypto Royalty by Toronto Life magazine, one of the Top 100 Black Women to watch in Canada, and one of the Top 100 Influencers for Sustainable Development Goals in 2019. Emma hosts the largest free "in person" blockchain conference in Canada and serves as a judge for the prestigious Canadian Marketing Awards.



Technology Award

Colleen Ward

Colleen is the Vice President of Delivery Practice and EPDE, Platforms & Technology, overseeing the Canadian Debit Card, Canadian Credit Card (TD Credit Cards, Aeroplan, MBNA and CUETS), Merchant Solutions, and Customer Assistance technology teams. She started her career with HSBC while studying at university, gaining expertise in lending and credit card processing through operations and sales support roles.

Colleen later became AVP of National Sales, leading The Brick, Canada's top private label credit card account. She then moved on to American Express, holding several global technology leadership roles for nearly 11 years.

Colleen earned a BA in Economics and Math from the University of Toronto and is an active member of TD's Women in Technology, Black Executive Steering Committee, Black Employee Network, and Visible Minority network.





Bell

Business Award

Frantz Saintelley

Frantz Saintelley is Université de Montréal's 14th Chancellor.

Since 2017, Mr. Saintelley has been President and Chief Operating Officer of LeddarTech, a leader in environmental sensing solutions for autonomous vehicles and advanced driver assistance systems. He is also co-founder and Chair of the Board of Groupe 3737, one of Québec's largest private business incubators. These commitments did not prevent him from further enriching his education and earning an EMBA from McGill University and HEC Montréal in 2020.

An entrepreneur, tech expert, speaker and philanthropist with over 25 years of experience in the electronics and automotive industries, Frantz Saintelley is an internationally recognized expert in cutting-edge technologies who has been behind patents, innovations and startups. He is an advisor to the Minister of the Economy and Innovation on Québec's research and innovation strategy and a member of the Québec Innovation Council.





PEPSICO

Decade Leader Award

Agapi Gessesse

Agapi is Executive Director of CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals, an organization dedicated to addressing economic issues affecting Black youth. She is passionate about CEE's mission-driven and evidence-based work.

Agapi also served as Executive Director of POV 3rd Street, an organization that helps marginalized youth break into the media industry through training, mentorship, job placement, and professional development opportunities. Through prior work as a fundraising professional, social enterprise manager, and coordinator of youth leadership programs, Agapi has established a record of accomplishment in operations management, program implementation and evaluation, financial stewardship, partner development, and community engagement. Her experience includes positions with United Way of Greater Toronto and the Toronto Community Housing Corporation.





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Diversity Award

Deborah Richardson

Deborah Richardson-Goulais, LL.B, BA is a proud Mi'gmaq woman and a member of the Pabineau First Nation. She has served at the highest levels of public service in Canada, being the first Indigenous woman to serve as a Deputy Minister within the Ontario public service.

A seasoned executive and a business-savvy lawyer with almost three decades of private, not-for-profit and public experience, Ms. Richardson is known as a change-maker and visionary leader. A forward-thinking, fiscally-responsible leader, Deborah is known for her caring, collaborative style, and ability to nurture relationships. This has contributed to her reputation as an authentic leader and humanitarian.





Health Sector Award

Jennifer Bernard

A passionate advocate for the advancement of healthcare and health equity, Jennifer Bernard joined the Women's College Hospital (WCH) Foundation as President & CEO on August 1, 2018.

A highly accomplished fundraising executive, Jennifer has a track record of outstanding results. Prior to joining WCH Foundation, Jennifer was at McMaster Children's Hospital Foundation, a part of Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation, which also included responsibility for the Women and Newborn Programs. She played a key role in developing new partnerships while doubling the annual revenue and extending the philanthropic reach of the Foundation.



Media

Andria Case

Andria Case joined CTV News Toronto in 1997 as a general assignment video journalist. Today, she anchors the station's weekend newscasts and continues to contribute to weekday newscasts with regular reports from across the city.

Case has become CTV News Toronto's go-to Arts and Entertainment Reporter. She shows tremendous tenacity on red carpets at events ranging from TIFF to The JUNO Awards. She has interviewed international celebrities including Oprah Winfrey, Brad Pitt, and Sting.

Prior to joining CTV News Toronto, Case was the producer and host for ONE O'CLOCK LIVE, a program that aired on CFPL-TV in London, Ont. Before that, she was a reporter and ENG camera operator for CHWI-TV News in Windsor, Ont. and also a writer and reporter for CFPL-TV in London, Ont.

Case was born in England to Jamaican parents, and spent her early years there before moving to Canada. She studied Journalism and Advertising at Ryerson University in Toronto. She speaks English.



Special Features

TREEMONISHA



Queen Hezumuryango, a talented rising star in the Canadian opera scene, will be performing a special piece from Volcano Theatre's latest production, Scott Joplin's TREEMONISHA, at the 2023 BBPA Harry Jerome Awards. With an impressive background in vocal performance and a list of notable credits, Queen is a gifted artist with a bright future ahead. This special feature promises to be a highlight of the evening, showcasing Queen's incredible talent and adding to the celebration of Black excellence at the HJA.

TREEMONISHA is a musical reimagining of one of history's first Black operas, brought to new life by an all-Black cast, orchestra, and core creative team of extraordinary Black women. Co-presented by Luminato Festival and TO Live in association with the Canadian Opera Company, Souleppper Theatre, and Moveable Beast, this production promises to be a night to remember. Don't miss the world premiere on June 6 at the St Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Bluma Appel Theatre!"





Special Features

Siphe November

Siphe November, a rising star in the Canadian ballet scene and a recipient of the 2022 BBPA Harry Jerome Award for Excellence in the Arts, will be a special feature at the 2023 BBPA Harry Jerome Awards. From dancing in the streets of his hometown in South Africa to becoming the youngest and only Black principal ballet dancer in the National Ballet of Canada, Siphe's inspiring story has been made into a documentary film, *Beyond Moving*.

As a professional dancer, Siphe's talent is evident not only in his buoyant jumps and clean lines in ballet but also in his fresh and innovative steps in street-dancing styles. In 2022, he choreographed his first work for the National Ballet of Canada's main stage, "On Solid Ground," which received a standing ovation.

Siphe's dedication to promoting a bridge between Africa and developed countries for talent to have the same opportunities as he did has earned him recognition, including the BBPA Harry Jerome Award for Excellence in the Arts in 2022. His performance at the 2023 HJA promises to be a highlight of the evening, showcasing his incredible talent and adding to the celebration of Black excellence. Don't miss this special feature at the 2023 BBPA Harry Jerome Awards!



2023 Honourees



**Spider "Chuck"
Jones**



Rick Gosling



**Lindell
Wigginton**



Andria Case



Emma Todd



**Rosemarie
Powell**



Colleen Ward



**Frantz
Saintelemy**



**Deborah
Richardson**



Ngozi Paul



**Agunbiade
Seun Richards**



**Jennifer
Bernard**



Agapi Gessesse

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Black Business and Professional Association
Entreprise noire et Association Professionnelle



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