

## Ricky Lewis, Grand Basileus--Inclusive Economic Growth

A vibrant economy enables individuals, organizations, communities, counties, states and others to not only survive but to thrive. As citizens of the US, we seek only the rights provided us in the Constitution of the United States of America. Like other citizens of all stripes, colors, creeds, beliefs, whatever, we seek above all opportunity for ourselves and our families to live the good life. Living the good life means among other things, exercising the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

That brings me to our topic and specifically: My Views on the Importance of Inclusive Economic – a new Business Plan for America - and how we as Black folks might get there.

As a member and head of one of the largest Black Greek Letter Organizations, I can say with some authority that be where the theme of this webinar suggest: Building an Inclusive Economy we need most as we build a Business Plan for America, the following:

### **Knowledge of**

- Who We Are
- Where We Are -- And most importantly
- Where We Are Going!!!

### **Who are we?**

There are 26,940 fraternities and sororities in the United States. Combined, these fraternities and sororities employ 9,002 people, earn more than \$3 billion in revenue each year, and have assets of \$7 billion. Of the 26, 940 fraternities and sororities in the United States nine (9) are comprised primarily of members of African descent. I represent one of 9 Black Greek lettered Organizations based here in the United States of America. But I hasten to add, while these members are predominantly American, they are from nations around the world.

Their total assets, based on present data = \$228,104,768, a quarter of a billion dollars or more. Caveats – these data are reported as of 3/30/2025 on one singular website for reporting year 2023

**This group of individuals represent the intellectual elite, businessmen, clergy, educators, medical professionals, lawyers, judges, entrepreneurs' - predominantly the professional community – community of scholars and doers. In short this group represent wealth (actual as well as access to wealth).**

### **Where are we?**

**We are all over the place. We are in our public schools, our colleges, and universities – public, private, independent, and parochial. We are in our churches and other places of worship. We are in our private businesses, corporate businesses, hospitals medical establishments, transportation, local, state national government and jails and prisons.**

**We are everywhere.**

### **Where are we going?**

**I have a few thoughts on where we ought to be going.**

- **We ought to be preoccupied with planning and building**
- **We ought to be the vanguard**
- **We ought to be strategic**
- **We ought to be intolerant**
- **We ought to be focused**

**The operant question is: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO? AND WHO DO WE WANT TO TAKE WITH US?**

**In conclusion, and based on just one segment of our collective (Fraternities and Sororities) there is NO Reason we can't do whatever we put our minds too!**