

## Black Footwear Forum National Event Returns this Fall in Detroit

### FDRA and PENSOLE Lewis College of Business & Design Unveil Dates for Fall Celebration

Today, the Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design and the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA), cofounders of the Black Footwear Forum (BFF), announced the dates for a national Black Footwear Forum celebration in Detroit from September 16–18, 2022. Attendees, executives, and industry leaders will gather for three days of events, celebrations, forums, and networking as the BFF continues to strengthen and support black professionals in the American footwear industry.



“With the opening of the Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design in May, we are well positioned to welcome black footwear industry professionals to our new campus in Detroit this Fall.” offered **Pensole Lewis College of Business & Design President Dr. D’Wayne Edwards**. He added “I can think of no better way to celebrate Detroit Month of Design in September than to host the Black Footwear Forum and bring the footwear industry to our great city. Stay tuned as we unveil many exciting updates about the event in the coming weeks because this will be a very special gathering.”

“Ever since the first BFF gathering in Washington, DC in February 2019, we have patiently waited for the right time to gather again in support of those in our industry the BFF is designed to serve.” said **FDRA President and CEO Matt Priest**. “That time is NOW, and that place is DETROIT. I can’t wait to get back together as a forum this September to continue to drive change in collaborative and innovative ways!”

The 2022 Annual Black Footwear Forum (BFF) in Detroit enjoys the corporate support of many great partners including The Athlete’s Foot, Caleres, Designer Brands, Foot Locker, NIKE, Off Broadway Shoe Warehouse, Rack Room Shoes, RG Barry Brands, and Steve Madden. To learn more about ways in which to support this year’s event, contact us at [info@fdra.org](mailto:info@fdra.org) or visit [blackfootwearforum.com](http://blackfootwearforum.com).

**About the Black Footwear Forum (BFF):** The Black Footwear Forum, formally known as the African American Footwear Forum (AAFF), invites footwear industry professionals and supporters to share stories and ideas and to create a dialog around the influence, leadership, and passion provided by blacks in the global footwear industry. This forum encourages collaboration to establish industry goals in the development of black talent at all levels. Surrounding the Forum are regional and national events that provide connecting conversations for black footwear professional brands to share concerns and solutions to help shape the conversation while bridging the gaps across the industry.

**About PLC:** PENSOLE Lewis College of Business & Design is the pipeline for career education and professional development in the design industry. We are the source for creative vision and progress; bearing the torch to push the culture forward — beyond what’s visible. At Pensole Lewis College, we offer a new path to break into the world of product creation. We prepare the largest talent pool of designers to enter the industry empowering them to make it better for the next generation, leaving our industry better than when we entered it.

**About FDRA:** Founded in 1944, FDRA is governed and directed by footwear executives and is the only trade organization focused solely on the footwear industry. It serves the full footwear supply chain and boosts the bottom lines of its members through innovative products, training and consulting on footwear design and development, sourcing and compliance, trade and customs, advocacy, and consumer and sales trend analysis for retailers selling shoes around the world. FDRA also runs the footwear industry’s weekly podcast Shoe-In Show featuring leading footwear executives and experts discussing key business trends. In all, FDRA supports nearly 500 companies and brands worldwide, representing 95% of total U.S. footwear sales, making it by far the largest and most respected American footwear trade and business association.