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## **BDPA Education and Technology Foundation Announces New Board Leadership**

COLLEGE PARK MD (April 12, 2010) – BDPA Education and Technology Foundation (BETF), a nonprofit organization made up of racially diverse CEOs and executive level management who promote educational programs for students of color in the information technology industry, today announced new officers and members of its board of directors.

BETF members re-elected Earl A. Pace, Jr., President/CEO for Pace Data Systems as the new board chairman. John Eckenrode, CEO for CPSI Inc. elected to serve as the board secretary. Ron Branch, President/CEO for Silverback Business Group was elected as a new board member.

“I am delighted to join the BETF board and I believe that Information Technology is an exciting industry which holds great rewards for young minorities who embrace both the constant change and challenge,” said newly-elected board member Ron Branch.

The new board will set the direction for BETF as it helps raise funds needed to advance the careers of African Americans and others in the information technology industry from the classroom to the boardroom. This year, BETF will continue to provide dozens of scholarships to high school and college students at the upcoming National BDPA Technology Conference in Philadelphia on July 28-31, 2010.

“It is truly a pleasure to welcome Ron Branch to the board of BETF. Ron has a wide background in the IT industry which has enabled him to build relationships with IT Professionals and thought leaders at all levels and throughout the United States,” said BETF Board Chairperson Earl Pace. “We look forward to his participation to both introduce BETF and its very important programs to a different group of professionals but also to his insights as BETF attempts to aggressively fund its Endowment Fund and increase the assistance we provide to High School and College students and the career building educational programs we fund for current IT professionals. I am certain BETF and BDPA will benefit from having Ron on our team.”

The new board leadership takes the helm at a time when unemployment is growing to painfully high levels for African American IT professionals and there is a dwindling numbers of African American students in college computer science programs. BETF works closely with the leadership of National BDPA and its 45 local chapters to put in place programs, scholarships and other services to impact on these dismal industry statistics.

"I am excited to work with Ron in his new role as a Board member to continue delivering value to BETF stakeholders, students and sponsors," said Wayne Hicks, BETF executive director. "He comes to us highly recommended by his peers in the industry. Ron's executive experiences with IBM and Oracle over the past 30 years as well as his current entrepreneurial efforts make him uniquely qualified to assist BETF. BETF is fortunate to have him in this leadership role."

**About BETF** -- Founded in 1992, BETF is a 501(c)(3) foundation with a mission to locate the funding necessary to support educational and technology programs for BDPA and others across the country.

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