

FIRM NEWS

Jongnic (JB) Bontemps Joins Schulte Black Affinity Group's Luncheon Reflecting on Juneteenth's History and Traditions

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Schulte's Black Affinity Group hosted a special Juneteenth luncheon featuring celebration and reflection on the holiday's significance. John K. Johnson, who serves as Schulte's Chief Innovation and Chief Diversity Equity and Inclusion Officer detailed Juneteenth's historical origin and key elements of its Juneteenth celebration, including signature cuisines, music and visual symbolism.

In a surprise appearance, award-winning film composer Jongnic (JB) Bontemps answered the question: what were the songs performed during early Juneteenths? His research showed the two most traditional spirituals sung on the Juneteenths of the 1800s were "Go Down Moses," a signature spiritual that invoked themes of ancient liberation to bring solace to enslaved Black Americans, and "No More Auction Block (Many Thousands Gone)," which was first published in Slave Songs of the United States in 1867 and belongs to a classification of slave songs known as "protest songs"

JB shared that singing these spirituals allowed Juneteenth celebrants to hold dear those they had lost while also invoking them in the festivities. These spirituals, embodying themes of freedom and protest, also offered a deeper appreciation for the day's historical roots and its enduring relevance. Through the sharing of a soul food meal, fellowship and the power of music, attendees were able to honor past struggles while celebrating freedom and community resilience.

Learn more about JB here.

Learn more about DEI at Schulte here.

Related People



**John
Johnson**

Chief Innovation Officer,
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