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Joe Dudley, Dudley Products, to Receive Business Courage Award from Los Angeles Black Business Expo Sept. 10



This is a rags to riches story if ever there was one: Going from meager beginnings as one of 11 children, considered retarded with a speech impediment – to becoming the founder of Dudley Hair Care Products which grosses \$30 million annually and employs 500 people—this is the story of Joe Louis Dudley, who started this journey with a \$10 investment.

“When I read the article in the South Bay News Observer about him, I looked up his number and called his company to invite him to receive the Business Courage Award this year at the Expo,” said Harold Hambrick, executive director of the Los Angeles Black Business Expo and Trade Show. “And he said ‘Yes’.”

Hambrick knew the man had been honored by many and had recently received the prestigious Horatio Alger Award. Hambrick had already visited Dudley’s headquarters in North Carolina and seen his worldwide operations which span the globe, when Dudley hosted the Ken Bridges memorial service (Bridges, mastermind behind the Matah Network, was killed by the infamous D.C. sniper bullet just when he was about to take off.) But, when Hambrick read that Dudley purposely did not sell his company so that he could remain a role model for self determination, even though many other Black owned hair care companies eagerly sold out to majority companies, Hambrick knew he wanted to award Dudley and support his decision to take that stand.

“Entrepreneurs enlist in a battle that few who work for a paycheck can understand,” said Hambrick. “This business game is not for the faint of heart. But to make it and be rolling in dough and say you have only five suits, a few houses, a good Cadillac and no diamonds and that you would rather keep your business than sell out--we need to recognize that man.”

Dudley wrote all about his life in *“Walking by Faith: I Am, I Can and I Will”*, a must read for an aspiring entrepreneur. In the book, he remembered how he stood on the shoulders of another black entrepreneur, S.B. Fuller, of the Fuller Beauty Products company.

Dudley will speak at the opening ceremonies kicking off the 2004 Los Angeles Black Business Expo and Trade Show. The award will be presented by Kevin Cohee, CEO of OneUnited Bank, presenting sponsor of Expo. Dudley will also share his expertise in international trade at the Africa USA Trade Conference.



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Now in its 16th year, the Los Angeles Black Business Expo and Trade Show will take place September 10-12, 2004 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Over 60,000 consumers are expected to patronize the 600 businesses that will exhibit for the three day high-powered networking affair.

The Expo is presented by One United Bank.; Premier Sponsors: Farmers, Secure Horizons, Comerica, City of L. A.; Sponsors: Lawry's Foods, Citibank, Wells Fargo, Washington Mutual, A.A.R.P., Felix Chevrolet and Cadillac, Union Bank of California, Xerox, Norman Lewis Limousine, KJLH, 100.3 The Beat, KTYM AM 1460, Los Angeles Sentinel, Wave Newspapers, L.A. Watts Times, Metropolis Los Angeles, and Electronic Urban Report. Transportation provided by Norman Lewis Limousine.

Admission is only \$5 –children 12 and under are free. For Expo details and a complete list of sponsors, visit www.expouupdate.com or call (323) 290-4743 or the West Coast Fashion hotline at (323) 281-1054.

For more information on Joe Dudley:

<http://www.fortune.com/fortune/smallbusiness/articles/0,15114,551989,00.html>

<http://www.dudleyproducts.com/Corporate/aboutdudleyproducts.html>

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