

## INVESTMENT GURU AND ABC NEWS CONTRIBUTOR MELLODY HOBSON TO KEYNOTE CBOF SPONSORS BREAKFAST

Mellody Hobson, president of Chicago-based money management firm Ariel Investments, will keynote the Chicago Business Opportunity Fair's Sponsors Breakfast. The highly-anticipated event takes place on Wednesday, March 31st, the final day of the three-day trade fair. The breakfast will be held in the Grand Ballroom of Navy Pier beginning at 8AM.

In making the announcement, Shelia Hill, president and CEO of the Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council, host of the Fair, said that having a speaker with Hobson's wealth of knowledge means that those attending the Breakfast will be highly informed and uplifted by her message. She said the Council scored a coup in getting a speaker of Hobson's stature and expertise.

“Since the Fair is immediately after the Breakfast, Mellody's speech will set the financial tone for a day devoted to minorities and corporations and government making contacts that can lead to business.”

Hill noted that founder, chairman and CEO of Ariel Investments is John W. Rogers, Jr., a major supporter of the Council whose commitment to diversity and feats in the business world have earned him numerous awards, including from the Council.

Hobson brings an impressive background to her keynote role. As president of Ariel Investments-which serves individual investors and retirement plans through its no-load mutual funds and manages separate accounts for institutional clients - she is responsible for firm-wise management and strategic planning, overseeing all operations outside of research and portfolio management. Additionally, Hobson serves as chairman of the board of trustees for the mutual funds. She joined the company in 1991 after graduating from Princeton University where she received her degree from the Woodrow Wilson School of International Relations and Public Policy

Hobson has become a nationally recognized voice on financial literacy and investor education. Specifically, she is a regular financial contributor on ABC's Good Morning America and spokesperson for both the annual Ariel/Schwab Black Investor Survey and the 2009 Ariel/Hewitt study, “401 (k) Plans in Living Color.” She is also actively involved with a variety of civic and professional institutions. Her community outreach includes serving as a board member of the Chicago Public Library and its foundation, The Field Museum, The Chicago Public Education Fund and The Sundance Institute. She is also a director of three public companies: DreamWorks Animation SKG, Inc., The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. and Starbucks Corporation. Additionally, she is on the board of governors of the Investment Company Institute and is a member of

the SEC Investment Advisory Committee. She is a former trustee of Princeton University. Lastly, Hobson is a member of the Economic Club of Chicago, the Commercial Club of Chicago and the Young President's Organization (YPO) and is a Henry Crown Fellow of the Aspen Institute.

In addition to her role on Good Morning America, Hobson has been a featured guest on ABC's Nightline and World News Tonight. In 2007, she became a regular columnist in Black Enterprise and is frequently quoted in various news publications including Money, Fortune, Fast Company and PINK magazines. In 2008, she was highlighted as a financial expert in a special PBS documentary entitled, "Retirement Revolution" and in 2009, Hobson hosted, "Unbroke: What You Need to Know about Money," an ABC News special that took an unconventional look at the fundamental of everyday finance.

Hill expressed delight that Hobson would be keynoting the Sponsors Breakfast. Said Hill, "Melody Hobson has in depth knowledge of money management, finances and investing. These are topics that all entrepreneurs need to hear. We are profoundly thrilled that she will be speaking to the over 2,000 CEOs, minority entrepreneurs, government officials and aspiring businesspeople because her advice is potent, particularly in these times when our economy is weak. We look forward to an inspiring, informative and uplifting speech whose lessons will resonate long after the speech is over."

CONTACT: Melody M. McDowell - 773-660-2001