FAMU professor selected to speak at Black Enterprises’ Women of Power Summit
By: Ameer Brown
Feb 25, 2014

TALLAHASSEE--Dr. Atira Charles, Assistant Professor of Management in the School of Business and Industry at FAMU, was selected as a highlight speaker at the 2014 Black Enterprise Women of Power Summit hosted by State Farm.

The Summit is a four-day professional leadership conference; it was held at the Boca Raton Resort & Club, in Boca Raton, FL, February 26 – March 1, 2014. The event catered to executives, professionals, entrepreneurs, and professors, bringing together more than 800 women of power from a wide variety of fields. The theme of this year’s summit was “Embrace Your Power. The Moment Is NOW!”

Sonia Alleyne, the editorial director for all careers and lifestyle coverage at Black Enterprise, spoke on the true essence of the summit and what it offers to the women who attend, ”The Black Enterprise Woman of Power Summit is a conference with a specific purpose: It was designed to help female professionals decode the corporate workforce so that they would have better experiences and more control over their professional lives as well as advance their careers.”

Dr. Charles spoke Thursday, Feb 27th, from noon to 1:15 PM. Her workshop was entitled, “Balancing Act: Strategies for Managing Racial & Gender Identities at Work”, where she coached guest on how to navigate workplace perceptions and biases. According to Dr. Charles, listeners gained useful emotional, psychological, and behavioral strategies that will increase ones chances of success; both personally and professionally.

“Everybody walked out the session understanding that self awareness and identity management matters, and it is something that they can achieve with strategic effort.” She added, ”A lot of the experiences people are feeling at work are human experiences that can be managed, and their racial and gender identities can be a source of empowerment.” Charles stated.

Alleyne went on to speak about the excitement around Dr. Charles’ presentation, “There are a number of factors that can impact a woman's career trajectory. Through her work Dr. Atira Charles has not only studied and identified them, she offers insight and strategies for helping women mitigate challenges that could easily derail their efforts. Our theme this year is, "Embrace Your Power," and we're happy to learn, from Dr. Charles, the strategies to accomplish just that."

Dr. Charles received both her B.S. and MBA from Famu’s SBI in 2003 and went on to receive her Ph.D. in organizational management from Arizona State University in 2008. Her life’s work focuses on race and gender in the workplace, bias and
stereotypes in the workplace, mentoring in diverse organizations, performance appraisal systems, and managing emotions.

Her most recent work was featured in Black Enterprise’s February “Woman of Power” edition, offering her expertise in organizational management and survival entitled, “Are You Suffering from an Identity Threat?” She was also recently published in “Politics in Organizations: Theory and Research—SIOP Frontier Series”, the piece was titled, “The Intersection of Race and Politics: A Framework of Racialized Organizational Politics Perceptions”.

As if her resume and body of work weren’t already impressive, Dr. Charles is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc, the Academy of Management, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and the Management Faculty of Color Association. She was also named one of ‘125 Outstanding Alumni’ during Famu’s 125th homecoming Presidential gala in 2012. Being invited to speak at the ‘Women of Power Summit’ will be added to her long list of achievements.

The co-editorial director of the summit and television host of the ‘Black Enterprise Business Report’, Caroline Clarke, said, “We are thrilled that we have this opportunity to pay well-deserved honor to women who are gifts to the world, their examples are proper tribute to the Legacy Award honorees before them, and powerful motivation for those to come.”

When asked how she felt about being surrounded by such elite company at the summit Dr. Charles stated, “I was looking forward to being in the room with a lot of the women who have motivated me over the years as a young black business woman and I can only hope and pray that I accomplish, in my lifetime, some of the things that they have. I was very excited and I am very fortunate”

President and CEO of Black Enterprise, Earl Butch Graves Jr, posted on twitter, “I cant be more excited about our Women of Power Summit…the summit is the most dynamic professional development event that you will ever attend!”

Activities at the summit included executive leadership and lifestyle workshops that “examine corporate trends, leadership, management skills, and small business issues” according to Black Enterprise. There were also luncheons, receptions, various networking opportunities and live entertainment by artist such as renowned R&B singer Tank.

Other keynote speakers and honorees included, Emmy and Tony Award winner, Cicely Tyson, world-class tennis player and entrepreneur Venus Williams, civil rights activist, Myrlie Evers, founder and President of the Children’s Defense Fund, Marian Right Eldma, Apple’s environmental director, Lisa Jackson, Nationwide’s Gale King, American Express’ Glenda McNeal, and many more.
For more information visit: http://www.blackenterprise.com/events/women-of-power-summit/. For any questions related to the event email Beevents@blackenterprise.com or call (212)-886-9599.