

# NEAREST & JACK

## ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE

### UNCLE NEAREST AND JACK DANIEL'S JOIN FORCES TO LAUNCH THE NEAREST & JACK ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN AMERICAN WHISKEY INDUSTRY

*Together the Two Tennessee Distilleries Have Pledged \$5 Million to Advance African American Leadership in Whiskey*

**LYNCHBURG, TN** – The Jack Daniel Distillery and the Nearest Green Distillery announced today the Nearest & Jack Advancement Initiative to further diversity within the American whiskey industry. Both companies are supporting it equally with an initial combined pledge of \$5 million to help create the Nearest Green School of Distilling, develop the Leadership Acceleration Program (LAP) for apprenticeships and establish the Business Incubation Program (BIP), focused on providing expertise and resources to African Americans entering the spirits industry as entrepreneurs. This joint initiative will be guided by an advisory board with members from both organizations.

Motlow State College, the fastest growing college in Tennessee, has worked with leaders from both companies for the past year to develop a curriculum for the Nearest Green School of Distilling. The STEM based and employable skills focused program has passed Motlow State requirements and is now awaiting approval from the Tennessee Board of Regents to begin moving toward accreditation by the institutions accrediting body SACSCOC. The certificate program may be offered as early as Fall 2021.

The Leadership Acceleration Program (LAP) will offer apprenticeships specifically to African Americans already in the whiskey industry, who are wanting to become a head distiller, head of maturation or production manager. The inaugural apprentices have already been identified and will begin shadowing at top distilleries throughout the country.

The third arm of the Nearest & Jack Advancement Initiative is the Business Incubation Program (BIP) that will offer African American entrepreneurs mentorship in all areas of the distilling business, including access to top marketing firms, branding executives, expanded distribution networks and other assets and opportunities to grow their spirits businesses.

“Generally, when companies talk about the need to improve diversity, few immediate action steps follow,” said Fawn Weaver, CEO, [Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey](#). “Our group is different. We are doers, and we all agreed to work together to improve diversity in our industry, and specifically, a way to get African Americans into top positions within our industry.

Nearest Green taught Jack Daniel how to make Tennessee whiskey and we're incredibly proud our companies are joining forces to further their legacies of excellence, and to make distilling and the whiskey industry we love more diverse."

"Given our deep commitment to diversity and inclusion, I am thrilled we are coming together in this way today," said Lawson Whiting, President and Chief Executive Officer, Brown-Forman Corporation, the parent company of Jack Daniel's. "This collaboration allows the extraordinary friendship of Nearest and Jack, and the hope they embodied during racially divided times in our country's history, to help us advance the next generation of African American leaders in our industry."

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### **About Uncle Nearest**

Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey, independently owned by CEO Fawn Weaver, honors the first known African American master distiller, Nathan "Nearest" Green. It is the most awarded American whiskey of 2019 and 2020 to-date, garnering more than 65 awards in the past 16 months, including Double Gold at the 2020 San Francisco World Spirit Competition and back-to-back honors of "World's Best" at Whisky Magazine's 2019 and 2020 World Whiskies Awards in New York and London. Uncle Nearest has also earned more than 20 Best in Class honors, including Cigar & Spirits Magazine naming Uncle Nearest one of the "Top 5 Whiskies in the World."

The whiskey is currently available in all 50 states and 12 countries (while shipping into a total of 148 countries), in more than 12,000 stores, bars, and restaurants, and at its 270-acre distillery in Shelbyville, Tenn., dubbed by a member of the press as "Malt Disney World." For more information please visit the Uncle Nearest [website](#), and follow on Instagram and Facebook @unclenearest.

### **About Jack Daniel's**

Officially registered by the U.S. Government in 1866 and based in Lynchburg, Tenn., the Jack Daniel Distillery, Lem Motlow, proprietor, is the first registered distillery in the United States and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Jack Daniel's is the maker of the world-famous Jack Daniel's Old No. 7 Tennessee Whiskey, Gentleman Jack Rare Tennessee Whiskey, Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Tennessee Whiskey, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire, Jack Daniel's Sinatra Select and Jack Daniel's Country Cocktails. Today, Jack Daniel's is a true global icon found in more than 170 countries around the world and is the most valuable spirits brand in the world as recognized by Interbrand.

### **About Brown-Forman**

For over 150 years, Brown-Forman Corporation has enriched the experience of life by responsibly building fine quality beverage alcohol brands, including Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey, Jack Daniel's & Cola, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire, Gentleman Jack, Jack Daniel's Single Barrel, Finlandia, Korbel, el Jimador, Woodford Reserve, Old Forester, Canadian Mist, Herradura, New Mix, Sonoma-Cutrer, Early Times, Chambord, BenRiach, GlenDronach, Slane, and Fords Gin. Brown-Forman's brands are supported by over 4,800 employees and sold in more than 170 countries worldwide. For more information about the company, please visit <http://www.brown-forman.com/>.

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