

Serving in the Spirit of a Transformational Leader



By Daryl Graham

Senior Vice President, Philanthropy, Strada Education Network

The [Rev. Charles Williams](#) spent his life advocating for equality, transforming [Indiana Black Expo](#) into a force for the social and economic advancement of African-Americans. So I was especially honored to represent Strada Education NetworkSM as we received the [Reverend Charles R. Williams Award from IBE](#) last week.

Honored because Strada Education shares the commitment of IBE — so deeply rooted in Williams' vision — to look beyond race to promote academic and social achievement for all.

Honored because Strada Education is part of such an impressive community network of individuals and organizations that have harnessed their collective energy to advance IBE's ideals over 47 years.

And honored because, just as we have for 56 years — first as USA Funds® and [now as Strada Education Network](#) — we remain focused on the importance of good corporate citizenship that helps open doors to opportunities for all.

Equality in education, careers

On July 14 I joined more than 3,000 corporate and community leaders in celebrating IBE's proud history as an effective voice and vehicle for the social and economic advancement of African-Americans.



Indiana Black Expo honored Strada Education Network, represented by Graham, along with actor Taye Diggs, left, and singer Johnny Gill.

Most humbling that day were the stories about the impact made not only by Rev. Williams, but also by those IBE honored that day — including actor Taye Diggs, the Screen Image Award recipient, and singer Johnny Gill, the Music Heritage Award recipient. It is a privilege to have Strada Education’s efforts mentioned along with those who have had such a meaningful impact in Indiana and beyond.

I am proud to be on the leadership team of an organization whose record of supporting [IBE and its programs](#) includes nearly \$1 million in support for efforts such as:

- IBE Statewide Education Conference.
- Indiana My Brother’s Keeper Roundtable.
- [OpportunIndy](#).
- [Circle City Classic](#) Education Day and College Readiness Workshop.

- African-American male national conference.
- Youth Empowerment Summit and Back to School Rallies.

But I'm even prouder that [Strada Education's commitment to the community](#) goes beyond financial support. Through word and deed, we believe in being a thoughtful leader and collaborator in service to the community, partnering with other organizations on a corporate level as well as through the work and giving of individual employees.

We believe that our guiding principle of Completion With a Purpose® — building a more purposeful path for America's students from education to employment and on to rewarding careers and fulfilling lives — applies to students from all backgrounds.

We celebrate IBE's 47 years of elevating the economic and social well-being of African-Americans. We take pride in receiving an award in the name of such an influential leader.

And we are honored to have the opportunity to continue the conversation to advance education and career success — for all.

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