

**AUDACIOUS**

# **AUDACIOUS COLLABORATES WITH THE BLACK INSTITUTE GROUP**

*Collaboration to Ensure AUDACIOUS does Social Equity Right*



The Black Institute Group logo (CNW Group/Australis Capital Inc.)

LAS VEGAS, April 20, 2022 /CNW/ - Australis Capital Inc. (CSE: AUSA) (OTC: AUSA) ("AUSA", "AUDACIOUS", or the "Company"), is proud to announce today that the Company has entered into a collaboration with the Black Institute Group ("B.I.G."). Under the collaboration, The Black Institute Group and AUDACIOUS will work on a number of social equity related initiatives, initially in New York State and potentially elsewhere later on.

## **The Black Institute Group**

The Black Institute Group is a minority owned company. The company has one very clear perspective and point of view and that is from the point of view of black people and people of color throughout the U.S. and diaspora. The company has two goals: firstly, to actually inform public policy and debate, making sure that people of color and black people in this country are counted in their own data, research and polling, rather than being a tab in someone else's poll. Secondly, the Black Institute Group trains and educates people of color. The company's strategies focus on training, polling, marketing and planning, as well as cultural competency.

## **Bertha Lewis**

The Black Institute Group is led by Bertha Lewis, the iconic civil rights leader who during her career has initiated and led many initiatives that have led to the betterment of people's lives. For the past 10 years, Ms. Lewis has also been a major advocate and activist in the cannabis space, with a clear focus on righting the wrongs related to people in the black community whose lives were derailed through non-violent cannabis related convictions.

Bertha Lewis has worked tirelessly as an activist and community organizer for over 35 years. She is the former CEO and Chief Organizer of ACORN, an influential national organization that mobilized urban communities at the grassroots level, fighting for their needs for over 40 years. Bertha has fought for immigrant rights by advocating at the city, state, and federal levels. She's been an integral part of the low-wage worker's campaign to guarantee higher pay, paid sick days, and family leave. Lewis has also worked with developers to create a landmark community benefits agreement to secure affordable housing, living wages, local hiring, and training programs for the community. Most recently, Lewis has led the charge in advocating for Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs).

Furthermore, she has led or been involved with numerous coalitions in the last twelve years advocating for policy reforms at the local, state, and federal levels, including immigrant voting, marijuana legalization, and environmental justice. In 2020, Lewis publicly raised the alarm about disproportionately high levels of toxic chemicals in minority neighborhoods. Lewis has been a guest on national TV and radio shows, including The Colbert Report, Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network show, MSNBC, NBC, Fox News, and CNN for her effective community leadership. Bertha Lewis received many accolades, including Essence Magazine's 2011 list of "28 Most Influential Black Women," Crain's New York's 100 Most Powerful Women in New

York, New York Magazine's "Most Influential in Politics," The New York Observer's "Political Power 80." Most recently, Lewis was listed on City & State Black Power 100 and recognized as a Cannabis Industry Power Player.

## **The Collaboration**

B.I.G. will advise on strategic approaches on the regulatory guidelines that have been outlined by the New York State Legislature and review the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) Control Board (CCB) revised regulations as they relate to the needs of AUDACIOUS.

The collaboration is focused on connecting social equity applicants with AUDACIOUS and for AUDACIOUS to engage with social equity licensees to optimize these groups' and individuals' ability to participate in the cannabis industry. The collaboration will be multi-faceted, and will include outreach to municipalities, community groups, politicians, media and other groups, as well as promoting AUDACIOUS and its social equity mission.

## **Management commentary**

Terry Booth, CEO, commented, "We are very proud to be working with the Black Institute Group and its iconic leader, Bertha Lewis, on the further rollout of our social equity program in New York State. Their track record in the community needs little description, and we are very pleased that with their guidance, we will be able to do the right thing the right way. Finally, I would like to wish everyone a great 420, celebrating the incredible advancements we have made in the cannabis community."

Bertha Lewis added, "While a growing number of licenses has been awarded to social equity applicants across the country, the next step for many of these people and groups is less clear. For instance, securing project finance while the applicant has a prior conviction is close to impossible. This is where AUDACIOUS comes in, whose people have a track record of advocacy, inclusion and operational excellence. We are pleased to be working with AUDACIOUS in helping to ensure that social equity groups can enter the industry on a level playing field with the competition and execute and operate to the best of their abilities, not being hampered by artificial constraints they are faced with due to their background or the colour of their skin."

Leah Bailey, Chief Business Development Officer at AUSA, commented, "Partnering with licensees or license applicants through social equity is the right thing to do, as well as gives us a head start and other advantages in certain markets. Conversely, while regulations in states such as New York - who clearly did their homework and are doing things right by taking a measured approach while leaning on learnings from other states where regulations have been sub-optimal, both in terms of industry operations and in terms of social equity – facilitate social equity applications. We will leverage our expertise, operational excellence and ownership of ALPS to ensure that our current and future partners will be the leaders in this and other states. Social Equity is one of the most meaningful developments in this industry, and we want to contribute to making sure people are able to participate fully."

## **About The Black Institute Group**

Since 2010, The Black Institute Group has shaped intellectual discourse and impacted public policy from the perspective of Black people in America and people of color throughout the diaspora by using forward-thinking strategies to achieve racial equity. B.I.G. is a Black-led company that is focused on strategies, policies, legislation and education that impact the concerns of people of color.

## **About AUDACIOUS**

AUDACIOUS is a next-generation MSO growing the cannabis industry of tomorrow from the ground up, led by industry pioneer Terry Booth and an accomplished management team with proven industry track records. With operations that range from providing industry-leading sustainable cultivation design and optimization to retail storefronts, growing flower in-house, and manufacturing award-winning brands, AUDACIOUS has products and solutions for everyone. Quickly expanding through innovative partnerships and collaborations, AUDACIOUS is forging the inclusive cannabis community of tomorrow, today. [Learn more about AUDACIOUS here.](#)

AUDACIOUS common shares trade on the CSE under the symbol "AUSA" and on the OTCQB under the symbol "AUSAF."


**Happy 420 to all!!**

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*the adequacy or accuracy of this news release.*


## **FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS:**

*Cautionary Note Regarding Forward-Looking Statements: This release includes certain statements and information that may constitute "forward-looking information" within the meaning of applicable Canadian securities laws. All statements in this news release, other than statements of historical facts, including statements regarding future estimates, plans, objectives, timing, assumptions or expectations of future performance, are forward-looking statements and contain forward-looking information. Generally, forward-looking statements and information can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as "intends" or "anticipates", or variations of such words and phrases or statements that certain actions, events or results "may", "could", "should", "would" or "occur". Forward-looking statements are based on certain material assumptions and analysis made by the Company and the opinions and estimates of management as of the date of this news release. These forward-looking statements are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors that may cause the actual results, level of activity, performance or achievements of the Company to be materially different from those expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements or forward-looking information. Although management of the Company has attempted to identify important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those contained in forward-looking statements or forward-looking information, there may be other factors that cause results not to be as anticipated, estimated or intended. There can be no assurance that such statements will prove to be accurate, as actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in such statements. Accordingly, readers should not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements and forward-looking information. Readers are cautioned that reliance on such information may not be appropriate for other purposes. The Company does not undertake to update any forward-looking statement, forward-looking information or financial out-look that are incorporated by reference herein, except as required by applicable securities laws.*

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CNW 07:30e 20-APR-22