

## INAUGURAL COHORT IMPACT REPORT

### August 2024 – February 2025

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### *Purpose and key outcomes from the first cohort*

The Franchise Ascension Initiative (FAI) is a groundbreaking six-month accelerator program developed by the IFA Foundation. Its mission is to prepare individuals from underrepresented and economically disadvantaged communities to become successful franchise owners by providing education, mentorship, resources, and industry access.

#### The FAI cohort gains access to:

- Hands-on brand selection training utilizing IFA's Franchise Opportunities Guide
- Virtual brand introductions from a variety of franchise companies and concepts
- Robust alumni engagement opportunities through support and follow-up as the FAI community grows and alumni advance in their careers

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

#### *Goals, structure, and unique value it provides to participants*

The FAI curriculum is composed of weekly, online, self-paced learning modules, covering a wide range of topics on franchising, entrepreneurship and business development. Class members also have the opportunity to meet in-person and build relationships with each other. Each year a new class will matriculate through the curriculum, while IFA simultaneously monitors the progress of each previous cohort.

#### FAI offers participants a unique, hybrid learning experience through:

- **Self-paced online modules** on franchising and business essentials
- **1-on-1 mentorship** with seasoned franchise professionals.
- **Access to premier IFA events**, including the IFA Advocacy Summit, Emerging Franchisor Conference, and IFA Annual Convention.
- **Community-building opportunities**, allowing participants to connect, collaborate, and grow as future franchise leaders.

### Key Impact Metrics:



FAI class members received 10-15 hours per week of direct online franchise education experience.



FAI class members were matched with a franchise mentor, who provided direct 1-on-1 mentoring throughout the program.



FAI class members attended three IFA signature events to gain exposure to the industry's leading franchise experts. (IFA Advocacy Summit, Emerging Franchisor Conference, IFA Convention)

# 250+

HOURS OF FRANCHISE  
EDUCATION PER  
PARTICIPANT

# 17

MENTOR MATCHES, EACH  
PROVIDING 6 MONTHS OF  
1-ON-1 COACHING

# 3

NATIONAL  
FRANCHISE  
EVENT  
EXPERIENCES

### Key Demographics:

# 9

 MEN

# 8

 WOMEN

# 2

 U.S. VETERANS

# 14

 U.S. STATES REPRESENTED

# 17

PARTICIPANTS  
IN THE  
INAUGURAL CLASS

## YEAR 1 SUCCESS STORIES & TESTIMONIALS

**Clarence Howell & C-A Washington** were invited to the World Franchise Show in Miami, FL as keynote speakers to share about their experiences as a franchisee and FAI class member.



**Chandler Hayden** was promoted from Franchise Development Coordinator to Franchise Development Manager with Taco John's.

*"My experience in the FAI was a dream come true and vastly transformative. The program gave us not only the tools but also offered hope and the tangible opportunity to succeed as franchise owners."*  
-Chandler Hayden

*"I am not alone in the process. The expertise and resources are accessible and available."*

*"With access to resources and extensive training, the FAI established an environment of continuous support long after program completion. I feel confident that I can navigate the challenges of franchising and accelerate my future franchise ownership."*  
-Ava Holt

*"It is not always what you know, but more so who you know...IFA is fighting on the frontlines to ensure franchising can continue to be a viable means for wealth generation for small business owners and their employees."*

*"This program did not simply educate me in purchasing a franchise—it inspired me to think owner-minded, to operate with intention, and to consider opportunities in the context of long-term viability."*  
-Sharonda Faison

## FAI SUPPORTERS

Your support powered this inaugural cohort from ambition to action. Together, we are opening doors and building a more inclusive future for franchising.

### FOUNDING SPONSOR \$250,000+

Raynya  
& Omar  
Simmons



### FOUNDING PARTNER - \$100,000 - \$250,000



### FOUNDING SUPPORTER - \$50,000 - \$100,000



David Barr  
Grandpre Family  
Lafond Moore Family Fund  
Brian Schnell  
Ivelisse Simon  
Mary and Will Thompson

### FOUNDING CONTRIBUTOR - <\$50,000



David Humphrey  
Michael & Jenann Isakson  
Paul Pickett & William Powell



**Our second cohort begins in Summer 2025!**  
Contact **DAVID SMITH** to get involved.

