**Johnathan Holifield:**Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Mr. Holifield was appointed Executive Director in October 2017. He is a recognized expert in economic and education inclusion and competitiveness, focusing on public-private partnerships and community system-building. Prior to his appointment, he co-founded ScaleUp Partners and authored *The Future Economy and Inclusive Competitiveness*: *How Demographic Trends and Innovation Can Create Economic Prosperity for All Americans*. Mr. Holifield’s interdisciplinary career includes serving as founding Vice President of Inclusive Competitiveness at NorTech, a leading regional innovation cluster and competitiveness organization, where he authored the Ohio Department of Higher Education statewide report*, Inclusive Competitiveness: Empowering Underrepresented Ohioans to Compete in the Innovation Economy,* and served on the Northeast Ohio Council of Regional Economic Policy Advisors. He was also founding Vice President of New Economy Enterprise at the Cincinnati USA Chamber of Commerce and founding Executive Director of CincyTech, a market-leading venture development organization. He has also held chief executive positions with the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy and Cleveland Urban League.

Mr. Holifield’s contributions include, leading the formation of a market-leading regional innovation leadership organization (possibly the first and only African American to do so), attracting support from Fortune 500 CEOs, university presidents and elected officials; raising over $40 million, leveraged to create networks of more than $250 million of early-stage risk capital, significantly increasing investment options for entrepreneurs; creating Ohio’s first information technology public school, which became a U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon School; and securing a $5 million appropriation to implement the state’s first STEM education and entrepreneurship program. Additionally, he’s executed partnerships to host the nation’s first summit on angel investing, higher growth entrepreneurship, STEM education and policymaking in urban communities and to create the nation’s first conference on urban and minority biomedical entrepreneurship.

Earning his B.A. from West Virginia University, Mr. Holifield was also elected football team captain, and later played for the Cincinnati Bengals of the NFL.  He received his J.D. and M.Ed. from the University of Cincinnati and a professional certificate from University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute.