New Study Reveals Ongoing Revenue Woes for Small Businesses, with Black-Owned Businesses Disproportionately Affected from Lingering Pandemic

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With a renewed focus on helping small businesses, Block Advisors develops program aimed at alleviating pandemic-related strain on Black small business owners

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Feb. 17, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- According to new data from its ongoing “Small Business Recovery Series” study, Block Advisors, a team within H&R Block (NYSE: HRB), reveals nearly half (47%) of small business owners are not optimistic about their businesses’ success in 2021, with more than 59% reporting less revenue than originally expected in 2020. Black business owners are experiencing even more prevalent and severe impacts from the pandemic according to those surveyed.

The study found that more than half of Black-owned small businesses experienced at least a 50% decrease in revenue during the pandemic compared to only 37% among white business owners. To address this disparity and to deliver on its commitment to building equitable connections within its own communities, H&R Block is channeling support and resources through Block Advisors to Black business owners. A new program – which is being piloted with the Urban League of Greater Kansas City – seeks to work with affiliates across the country, city by city, to improve financial management and readiness for small businesses owned by Black people and other historically underrepresented groups to gain access to capital.

“Clearly there’s a grave need to support small business owners, especially those hit hardest by the pandemic,” said Ian Hardman, Vice President and GM of Small Business at H&R Block. “Black-owned businesses play such an important role in improving local economies and uplifting communities everywhere, and we’re committed to helping them survive and thrive.”

Block Advisors is dedicated to meeting the tax, bookkeeping, and payroll needs of small business owners year-round. Block Advisors small business certified tax pros can help small businesses not only manage their taxes, but this year especially, navigate the complicated tax implications from stimulus aid related to the pandemic.

As part of its program with the Urban League, Block Advisors small business certified tax pros will provide free personalized coaching designed to improve financial management, tax compliance, and bookkeeping and payroll; ultimately increasing business owners’ awareness of and confidence when trying to gain access to capital. The Urban League will also provide free credit-building services, as needed.

"Black communities revolve around Black-owned businesses,” National Urban League President Marc H. Morial said. “When they thrive, Black communities thrive. By offering coaching and financial counseling to Black business owners, Block Advisors are helping to create an economy that is equitable, robust and resilient for all Americans."

As business owners meet with their Block Advisors coaches and the Urban League, additional free services and connections to resources will be provided as needed. H&R Block is also offering micro-grants to program graduates on an as-needed basis to help business owners bridge to larger and more permanent sources of capital.

To learn more about Block Advisors and H&R Block’s year-round support for small businesses, visit blockadvisors.com. For more information on the Urban League of Greater Kansas City, visit www.ulkc.org.

Our small business tax professional certification is awarded by Block Advisors, a part of H&R Block, based upon successful completion of proprietary training. Our Block Advisors small business services are available at participating Block Advisors and H&R Block offices nationwide.

About H&R Block

H&R Block, Inc. (NYSE: HRB) provides help and inspires confidence in its clients and communities everywhere through global tax preparation, financial products and small business solutions. The company blends digital innovation with the human expertise and care of its associates and franchisees as it helps people get the best outcome at tax time, and better manage and access their money year-round. Through Block Advisors and Wave, the company helps small business owners thrive with disruptive products like Wave Money, a small business banking and bookkeeping solution, and the only business bank account to manage bookkeeping automatically. For more information, visit H&R Block News or follow @HRBlockNews on Twitter.

About Urban League of Greater Kansas City

The mission of the Urban League of Greater Kansas City is to enable African Americans and other disadvantaged populations to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights. The Urban League provides programs and services to: ensure that youth are educated and equipped for economic self-reliance; help adults attain economic self-sufficiency through jobs,

entrepreneurship, and wealth creation; assist in ensuring access to quality, affordable healthcare; remove barriers to equal participation in the economic mainstream; and advocate for racial equity and social justice.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/0e3daff3-d879-4c97-bb2c-07482b915ff7

Source: HRB Tax Group, Inc.

Small Business Recovery Series

A Block Advisors study reveals Black-owned small businesses disproportionately hit from pandemic.