



Assembly Member **SANDRÉ SWANSON**  
News Release

**For Immediate Release:**  
March 16, 2009

**Contact:** Douglas MacLean  
(916) 319-2016

## Swanson Posthumously Honors Dr. C. Diane Howell, Oakland Community Leader, At Assembly “Woman Of The Year” Ceremony

**(Sacramento)** – Dr. C. Diane Howell, a long-time leader in Oakland’s African American community, was honored posthumously on the floor of the State Assembly today as one of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus’s “Woman of the Year,” said Assemblymember Sandré R. Swanson. (D-Alameda) The ceremony honors outstanding women in each Assembly district throughout the state. Honorees are chosen by their local Assemblymember.

Assemblymember Swanson, who nominated her for the award, stated that, “Dr. Howell was a tireless advocate for economic development in the African American and greater East Bay community. Her work empowered countless entrepreneurs, and fostered a strong community where Black business owners could strengthen their networks and grow their enterprises. In honoring her work and her memory, we celebrate the tremendous impact we continue to feel from her contributions.”



A long-time resident of the Bay Area, Dr. Howell led several influential community organizations. Recognizing the need to better promote African American businesses in the Bay Area, she launched the Black Business Listings (BBL) newspaper from the personal computer on her dining room table in 1989. She served as the editor and publisher for almost twenty years. In 1996, she began producing the Oakland Black Expo, an annual event that promotes African American economic development, and also provides families with college preparation information and assistance. In 2000, she established SEEDS (Self-Empowerment through Education Entrepreneurship and Dreams), a non-profit that has awarded more than \$25,000 in scholarships to support the education of local youth.

Dr. Howell was born in Chicago, Illinois. She earned a B.A. in psychology from Barnard College before attending UC Berkeley, where she earned her Ph. D. in clinical psychology in 1978. As a licensed clinical psychologist, she worked in private practice for more than fifteen years. Through the Bay Area Association of Black Psychologists, she played a role in the famous “Larry P.” case, which eliminated the use of IQ tests to track African-American students in public schools.

“Dr. Howell’s passing was a great loss to our community. But her legacy will continue to be felt through the hundreds of successful businesses and thousands of lives she influenced. Her life will continue to be a shining example for future generations to follow,” Assemblymember Swanson concluded.

Dr. Howell passed away on Christmas Eve, 2008 after a brief illness.

###

**Capitol:** State Capitol - P.O. Box 942849 - Sacramento, CA 94249-0016 - **Tel:** (916) 319-2016 - **Fax:** (916) 319-2116  
**District:** 1515 Clay Street, Suite 2204 - Oakland, CA 94612 - **Tel:** (510) 286-1670 - **Fax:** (510) 286-1888