



Assembly Member **SANDRÉ SWANSON**

News Release

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Contact: Amy Alley

(916) 319-2016

California Legislative Black Caucus To Honor Lou Gossett, Jr., Rafer Johnson, And Other Legends In Black History

The California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) announced today that it will award eight honorees with Legends Awards during several Black History Month celebrations in Sacramento.

The celebration will begin with a reception on February 24, 2010, at the Leland Stanford Mansion in Sacramento, followed by an awards dinner during which the eight honorees will be introduced to an audience of constitutional officers, Members of the California State Legislature, and other special guests. The following day, each of the honorees will be formally recognized with resolutions from the California State Assembly during a Black History Month ceremony on the Assembly floor.

"The California Legislative Black Caucus collaborated to plan a number of extraordinary events to commend the intellectual talent and historical significance of important legends in Black culture and history," said Assemblymember Sandré R. Swanson (D-Alameda), Chair of the Legislative Black Caucus.

"This year, the CLBC will honor a vast array of important cultural icons, including an Olympic Gold Medalist, a trailblazing Academy Award winner, a pioneering newscaster, and several modest philanthropists and civil justice advocates who have selflessly dedicated their creative and intellectual talents to the betterment of the Black community and the State," said Assemblymember Swanson.

CLBC proudly announces the following honorees of the 2010 Legends Award:

Lou Gossett, Jr.

Academy Award Winning Actor & Social Justice Advocate

In 1982, Lou Gossett, Jr. became the first African-American male to win the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor. In 2006, Mr. Gossett founded the Eracism Foundation, which is dedicated to creating entertainment that educates and raises awareness to issues such as racism, ignorance and societal injustice.

Rafer Johnson

Olympic Gold Medalist and National Advocate for Children

Rafer Johnson won the Gold Medal in the Decathlon in 1960 and is a member of the National Track and Field and U.S. Olympic Halls of Fame. He is the founder of the Special Olympics of Southern California and has numerous educational and recreational facilities that are honored to bear his name.

Oral Lee Brown

Philanthropist & Entrepreneur

In 1987, Oral Lee Brown adopted the entire first grade class at Brookfield Elementary School, which is located in East Oakland, and established the Oral Lee Brown Foundation to pay for each student's college education. She is the owner of Nationwide Realty/T.P.I. Corporation.

Reverend Cecil Williams

Spiritual & Civil Rights Leader

Reverend Cecil Williams is the founder of the Glide Foundation and Minister of Liberation of Glide Memorial United Methodist Church in San Francisco. For 45 years, as minister, author, community leader and spokesperson for the poor and marginalized, he is respected and recognized as a national leader on the forefront of social change.

Dr. Anthony Iton

Nationally Renowned Public Health Advocate

Anthony B. Iton, M.D., J.D., MPH, joined the California Endowment in October 2009 as the Senior Vice President of Healthy Communities. He is renowned for creating innovative public health practices designed to eliminate health disparities and improve the quality of life in California's low-income communities.

Dennis Richmond

Pioneering Journalist, Newscaster & Humanitarian

Dennis Richmond, a Bay Area icon, started at KTVU in 1968 and became a top anchor at the station from 1976 to 2008. He has earned numerous Emmy Awards and has been honored by many civic organizations. He is also the recipient of the Humanitarian Award of Oakland, California, the highest honor given in the city.

Gwen Moore

Former Legislative Chair & Consumer Advocate

The Honorable Gwen Moore, a former member of the California Assembly, served as Majority Whip and gained a national reputation as Chair of the prestigious Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee. She currently serves as the 1st Vice President of the California State Conference of the NAACP, Co-Vice Chair of the California Utility Diversity Council, and is Founder and CEO of GeM Communications Group.

Dr. Raye Richardson

Pioneering Business Owner, Scholar & Renaissance Woman

In 1960, Dr. Raye Richardson and her husband, Julian Richardson, founded Marcus Books, the oldest independent Black bookstore in the country. Dr. Richardson has received numerous honors and has taught at UC Berkeley numerous graduate and professional institutions. She is also the former Chair of Black Studies at San Francisco State University. She has authored, produced and directed theatrical plays and will be inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 2010.

CLBC began its commemoration of Black History Month with the unveiling of the renowned Bernard and Shirley Kinsey African-American art exhibit at the California Museum. The famous collection, entitled African-American Treasures, includes rare historical documents that create a context for extraordinary pieces of sculpture and paintings by African-American artists. Senator Curren Price, Jr. (D-Los Angeles) spearheaded the arrangements to bring this extraordinary collection of art to Sacramento, marking its arrival with a public grand opening attended by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and many other notable guests. The Kinsey art exhibit will run through May 2, 2010, at the California Museum.

Members of the California Legislative Black Caucus include Assemblymember Sandré R. Swanson (D-Alameda), Chair; State Senator Curren Price, Jr. (D-Los Angeles), Vice-Chair; Speaker of the Assembly Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles); Assemblymember Steven C. Bradford (D-Gardena); Assemblymember Wilmer Amina Carter (D-Rialto); Assemblymember Mike Davis (D-Los Angeles); Assemblymember Isadore Hall, III (D-Compton); Senator Roderick D. Wright (D-Inglewood).

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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

