



Joint Center Honors Trailblazer Dr. Dorothy I. Height

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Dr. Dorothy I. Height with Ralph B. Everett, President and CEO of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies will honor Dr. Dorothy I. Height, Chair and President Emerita of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) and Chairperson of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, as the recipient of its 2009 Louis E. Martin Great American Award at its annual fundraising gala Tuesday night at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Washington.

Dr. Height will be recognized for a career filled with far-reaching achievements spanning more than six decades. In her work with the YWCA and the NCNW, Dr. Height has championed equality and human rights for all and worked tirelessly to empower women of color and strengthen African American families.

“Dr. Dorothy Height invigorated the early civil rights movement with her ideas and her grace, and since that time, she has remained an ever-present force to be reckoned with on a broad range of vital issues,” said Ralph B. Everett, Esq., the Joint Center’s President and CEO. “Through it all, she has made a tremendous difference in propelling our nation toward the fulfillment of its most cherished ideals. It is fitting that we honor her for the difference she has made and the people she has inspired over so many years.”



Ralph B. Everett, President and CEO of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, joins Judge Joyce London Alexander Ford, outgoing chair of the Joint Center's Board of Governors, in presenting Dr. Height with the Louis E. Martin Great American Award, its highest honor.

The Louis E. Martin Great American Award, named after the legendary journalist and presidential advisor and founder of the Joint Center, honors an individual who has promoted racial harmony while championing policies that have made a difference in American society. Previous award winners include former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, House Majority Whip James E. Clyburn, D-SC, Muhammad Ali, lawyer and civil rights leader Vernon Jordan, and Congressman Charles Rangel, D-NY, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

At its Annual Dinner, the Joint Center will also honor the memory of Dr. John Hope Franklin, the world renowned historian who died on March 26 after a lifetime of breaking new ground in the way American history is told and remembered. Noted for essentially creating the field of African American history and for his contributions to the advancement of civil rights, Dr. Franklin served as the first African American department chair at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, the first African American endowed chair at Duke University and the first African American president of the American Historical Society.

Hosted by the Joint Center each year for more than a quarter century and with this year's theme of New Thinking for a New Generation of Leaders, the Annual Dinner is the organization's major fundraising event of the year and provides an opportunity for a broad range of government, business, civic and community leaders from across the country to celebrate the rise of African Americans in the nation's political and civic life. Serving as national chairperson of the gala is Lowell McAdam, President and CEO of Verizon Wireless, the nation's premier wireless provider.