

Community leaders honored at National Coalition's Spirit of Democracy Awards



Spirit of Democracy Awards Gala Celebrates Our Brothers. Pictured (L – R): William Kellibrew IV, NCBCP; Richard Womack, Sr., NCBCP; Jonathan McDaniel, honoree/actor; Debra Speed, Verizon; Al Dotson, honoree/100 Black Men of America; Donna Frisby Greenwood, Knight Foundation; Melanie L. Campbell, NCBCP; Tanya Lombard, AT&T; Shawn Dove, honoree/Campaign for Black Male Achievement Open Society Foundations; Joshua DuBois, honoree/The White House.

Washington, DC – The powerful and positive visual of over 200 strong black men standing to represent as mentors, community organizers and leaders will be deeply embedded into the mind of nearly 300 people who attended The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation's (The National Coalition) 15th annual Spirit of Democracy Awards Gala in Washington, DC last week.



Spirit of Democracy Awards honoree and SEIU executive vice president, Gerald Hudson, holds a plaque given to Janet Campbell (right) in memory of her daughter Ruby Campbell Pulliam. National Coalition president Melanie L. Campbell looks on.

As the night was dedicated to “Celebrating Our Brothers,” six

phenomenal men doing constructive work to empower the African American community were honored. There was also a special Servant Leadership and Community Service Award established in memory of the former manager of the annual Spirit Awards, Ruby Campbell Pulliam.

“It was important to take a moment to lift up and celebrate what the brothers are doing in our communities across the country,” said president and CEO of The National Coalition, Melanie L. Campbell. “The men who dedicate their lives to mentoring, social justice, training and creating opportunities for our youth – especially those running black male initiatives – are truly the fabric of our community.”

In accepting the Visionary Leadership and Community Empowerment Award, Shawn Dove, campaign manager for Open Society Foundations Campaign for Black Male Achievement, said, “There is no lone ranger coming into our community to save the day. The iconic leaders that we are waiting for are right here already.” Dove continued, “The answers lie in the hands, the hearts, and the heads of young black men that are in our community everyday. We’ve got to applaud them, we’ve got to lift them up and we have to support them.”

In addition to Dove, the 2012 Spirit of Democracy Award recipients are:

–Jonathan McDaniel, actor, recording artist and technology advocate, received the Black Youth Vote Civic Leadership Award.

–David Honig, founder and president Alliances, Minority Media & Telecommunications Council received the Technology and Economic Empowerment Award.

–Joshua DuBois, executive director, The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships received the Public Service and Community Empowerment Award.

–Gerald Hudson, executive vice president, Service Employees International Union, received the Community Empowerment and

Labor Leadership Award.

—Al Dotson, chairman of the board, 100 Black Men of America, Inc, received the Community Empowerment and Mentoring Organization of the Year Award.



Spirit of Democracy honorees pause for a photo. Pictured (L - R): David Honig, honoree/Minority Media & Telecommunications Council; Shawn Dove, honoree/Campaign for Black Male Achievement Open Society Foundations; Al Dotson, honoree/100 Black Men of America; Melanie L. Campbell, NCBCP; Jonathan McDaniel, honoree/actor; Vivica A. Fox, host; Richard Womack, Sr., NCBCP.

Actress and producer Vivica A. Fox (Set It Off, Kill Bill) hosted the gala. Demetria McKinney, recording artist and star of Tyler Perry's House of Payne, skillfully performed her newest song "Take Away" and blew the audience away with her rendition of Whitney Houston's, "You Give Good Love." The People's Community Baptist Church Men's Choir also performed. The event was broadcast live on the Internet and can be viewed at: www.ncbcp.org.

"We rolled out the red carpet for the stars of our community," said Richard G. Womack, Sr, chairman of the Board of Directors of The National Coalition. "We had good food, stellar performances by the choir and Demetria McKinney, Vivica Fox was a gracious host, and the room was packed wall-to-wall with

role models for the many young people in attendance. It was a wonderful celebration of the brothers and their work.

The People's Community Baptist Church Men's Choir performin at the Spirit of Democracy Awards Gala. The Spirit of Democracy Awards are presented to individuals and organizations who have demonstrated a consistent commitment to creating balance in the democratic process and support The National Coalition's mission and vision of making civic participation a cultural responsibility and tradition. Sponsors include AT&T, Verizon, AMGEN, AFL-CIO, SEIU, Knight Foundation, and Dewey Square Group, among others. For more information on The National Coalition visit www.ncbcp.org.

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