

Rev. Joseph Lowery, Evelyn Gibson Lowery, Ambassador Cook, Rep Sewell, & DeMaurice Smith at Drum Major Awards



Participants in sclc/WOMEN's Drum Major for Justice Awards Dinner look on as Dr. Joseph E. Lowery closes out the program. Pictured behind Dr. Lowery (L-R): Honoree DeMaurice Fitzgerald Smith, NFL Players' Association; Karyn Greer, WXIA-TV; Henry Panion III, PhD, producer and composer; Evelyn Gibson Lowery, sclc/WOMEN; Dr. Christine King Farris, Dr. King's sister; and Congresswoman Terri A. Sewell (D-AL). (Photo Credit: Donnie Hunter)

ATLANTA – Ambassador Suzan Johnson Cook, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large for International Religious Freedom, U. S. State Department, was visibly moved as she accepted her award at the SCLC/Women's Organizational Movement for Equality Now, Inc.'s (sclc/WOMEN, Inc.) 34th Annual Drum Major for Justice Awards Dinner held in Atlanta last week.



Dr. Evelyn Gibson Lowery (left), sclc/WOMEN, Inc. presented Ambassador Suzan Johnson Cook, U.S. Ambassador-At-Large for International Religious Freedom, with the Religious Freedom Award at sclc/WOMEN

Inc's recent Drum Major for Justice Awards Dinner. WXIA-TV's Karyn Greer (right) served as MC of the event. (Photo Credit: Philip McCollum)

"I could not miss this moment," Ambassador Cook said as she accepted the Religious Freedom Award. "It is such an honor to be here on this day with civil rights royalty – especially our queen, Mrs. Evelyn Lowery."

For the past 34 years Dr. Evelyn Gibson Lowery, founder of sclc/WOMEN, Inc, observes April 4, the day Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, by celebrating leaders who exemplify the spirit of Dr. King. Lowery recruited an impressive, intergenerational group of leaders to participate in the program including: Dr. King's sister, Christine King Farris; former Atlanta Mayor, Shirley Franklin; Atlanta City Councilman Kwanza Hall; and civil rights leader and King confidant, Dr. Joseph E. Lowery.

"Having been a part of the civil rights movement from the beginning, I am very proud to present Drum Major Awards to these accomplished leaders," said Mrs. Lowery. "Each of the honorees, in their own way and respective areas, are answering Dr. King's call to be a Drum Major for Justice."

In addition to Ambassador Cook, 2013 Drum Major for Justice honorees are:

Dr. Henry Panion III, PhD (Magnificent Maestro Award) - University of Alabama Professor and Grammy/Dove Award winning producer, composer, and conductor

DeMaurice Fitzgerald Smith (Sports Award)- executive director, NFL Players' Association

Representative Stacy Y. Abrams (Government Award), GA House Minority Leader

Congresswoman Terri A. Sewell (Government Award), U.S. House

of Representatives

Minnie Morgan (Faithful Servant Award), Teamsters Local Union 528

Seaborn Johnson (Auburn Avenue Entrepreneur Award), Barber Lynard Thomas (Youth Award), Evelyn Gibson Lowery Heritage Tour talent contest Winner



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Founded in 1979, SCLC/Women's Organizational Movement for Equality Now, Inc. is an independent 501 (C) (3) nonprofit organization providing a diverse array of services to improve and empower at-risk and low-income families. Programs include: youth mentoring, domestic violence education, HIV/AIDS education, and computer training. Their Heritage Pride program hosts the annual Evelyn Gibson Lowery Civil Rights Heritage Tour through the cradle of the civil rights movement and has erected 13 monuments honoring civil rights icons. For more information call (404) 584-0303.