

**SURGEON GENERAL REGINA M. BENJAMIN TO RECEIVE
NAACP 2011 CHAIRMAN'S AWARD
DURING LIVE BROADCAST OF "42ND NAACP IMAGE AWARDS"
FRIDAY, MARCH 4 ON FOX**

LOS ANGELES, CA – U.S. Surgeon General Regina M. Benjamin will receive the NAACP 2011 Chairman's Award during the 42nd NAACP IMAGE AWARDS, broadcast live from Los Angeles' historic Shrine Auditorium, Friday, March 4 (8:00-10:00 PM ET live/PT tape-delayed) on FOX, it was announced today by Vicangelo Bulluck, executive producer of the telecast and executive director of the NAACP's Hollywood Bureau.

The Chairman's Award, chosen by NAACP Chairman Roslyn M. Brock, is bestowed in recognition of special achievement and distinguished public service. Past honorees include Tyler Perry, Former Vice President Al Gore and Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai, Aretha Franklin, Bono, President Barack Obama, The Dave Matthews Band, Danny Glover, Aaron McGruder and Janet Jackson.

"I am pleased to offer the 2011 Chairman's Award to Dr. Regina M. Benjamin, the 18th Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service," stated Ms. Brock. "Dr. Benjamin's community-oriented values, as displayed in her commitment to making health care accessible for minorities and rural patients, embody the Association's belief in equal health care rights for all citizens. As 'America's Doctor,' Benjamin provides information on improving individual health and the health of the nation. Her efforts capsize strides for women and racial minorities by way of her phenomenal community service and dedication."

"I am honored to receive the NAACP 2011 Chairman's Award and I am delighted to join the register of distinguished past honorees. In its role as a premier champion for civil rights and equal opportunity, the NAACP shares my focus on Prevention and belief that quality health care, and healthy environments should be made available to all. I commend the leadership and members of this outstanding organization for their courageous, enduring and steadfast advocacy on behalf of all the American people," said Dr. Benjamin.

As Surgeon General Dr. Benjamin is responsible for providing the public with the best scientific information available on how to improve their health and the health of the nation. Dr. Benjamin also oversees the operational command of 6,500 uniformed health officers who serve in locations around the world to promote, protect, and advance the health of the American People.

Dr. Benjamin is Founder and Former CEO of the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in Alabama, former Associate Dean for Rural Health at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in Mobile, and Past Chair of the Federation of State Medical Boards

of the United States In 1995, she was the first physician under age 40 and the first African-American woman to be elected to the American Medical Association Board of Trustees. She served as President of the American Medical Association Education and Research Foundation and Chair of the AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs (CEJA). In 2002 she became President of the Medical Association State of Alabama, making her the first African American female president of a State Medical Society in the United States.

Dr. Benjamin has a BS in chemistry from Xavier University, New Orleans; MD degree from the University of Alabama, Birmingham; an MBA from Tulane University and eleven honorary doctorates. She attended Morehouse School of Medicine and completed her family medicine residency in Macon, Ga. She established a clinic in a small fishing village in Alabama to help its uninsured residents. Dr. Benjamin persevered through Hurricane Georges in 1998, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and a devastating fire, in 2006, often putting up her own money to cover expenses. She also became nationally prominent for her business acumen and humane approach to preventive medicine.

Dr. Benjamin is a member of the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians. She was a Kellogg National Fellow and a Rockefeller Next Generation Leader. Some of her numerous board memberships included the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, Catholic Health Association, and Morehouse School of Medicine.

In 1998 Dr Benjamin was the United States recipient of the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights. She was named by *Time Magazine* as one of the "Nation's 50 Future Leaders Age 40 and Under." She was featured in a *New York Times* article, "Angel in a White Coat," in *People Magazine*, on the December 1999 cover of *Clarity Magazine* and was on the January 2003 cover of Reader's Digest, She was also "Person of the Week" on ABC's *World News Tonight* with Peter Jennings, and "Woman of the Year" by CBS *This Morning*. She received the 2000 National Caring Award which was inspired by Mother Teresa, received the papal honor *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* from Pope Benedict XVI and was awarded a MacArthur Genius Award Fellowship.

Event sponsors for the 42nd NAACP Image Awards include UAW/Chrysler, Walgreens, Wells Fargo, FedEx, Hyundai, Southwest Airlines, Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, Bank of America, Ford Motor Company, Pepsi and American Airlines.

Founded on Feb. 12, 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its half-million adult and youth members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, and monitor equal opportunity in the public and private sectors. For more information on the NAACP IMAGE AWARDS, please visit www.naacpimageawards.net.