



For Immediate Release

The Association for the Study of
African American Life & History
84th Annual Black History Luncheon

www.asalh.net; lyndiagrانت@lyndiagrانت.com

Phone: 202-865-0039

Executive Director: Sylvia Y. Cyrus,

PR Coordinator: Lyndia Grant, Call 202-518-3192

"The History of Black Economic Empowerment" 84th Annual Black History Luncheon

ASALH is the world's oldest learned society devoted to the research, education, preservation and presentation of African American life, history and culture and annually **sets the national theme for Black History Month. This year, the national theme is: "The History of Black Economic Empowerment"**

On Saturday, February 20, 2010, The Renaissance Hotel, located at 999 9th Grand Ballroom will be transformed at 12:00 Noon, when the spirit of Dr. Carter G. Woodson will rise during the 84th Annual Black History Month celebration. This year's theme will recognize many success stories from the lives of successful, Black, men and women who came along ahead of us.

The luncheon is the crowning event for ASALH and boasts attendance of 1,200 people. It gives the association an opportunity to fundraise for specific projects and general support, and affords great public relation opportunities for corporate partners to showcase their business and commitment to the community.

Luncheon emcee, the grand daughter of Madam C.J. Walker, A'Lelia Bundles is a reminder of the great legacy created by Madam C.J. Walker, the first African American, female entrepreneur. DC Council Chairman Vincent Gray, also an entrepreneur, is the Luncheon Chair, and National Urban League's Marc Morial will deliver the keynote address.

As both politician and leader of the National Urban League, Marc H. Morial has dedicated himself to helping others. Morial served two terms as mayor of New Orleans. His tenure marked the third time in the city's history that an African-American held the top post. When he first won the election in 1994 few, it seemed, expected this politically inexperienced son of Ernest "Dutch" Morial—the city's first African-American mayor—to accomplish what he did during his first term. By putting in place a series of anti-crime measures, reforming the police department, and capturing federal funding for other programs, Morial and his administration set in motion a precipitous drop in violent crime in the city.

Enjoying near-unprecedented support and popularity—among both black and white residents of New Orleans—he easily won a second term in 1998. "Morial," noted *New York Times* reporter Rick Bragg said, "has always been one of the crown princes of this city," and remarked that the younger politician's popularity had now surpassed that enjoyed by his late father. Morial moved on in 2003 to become president and CEO of the National Urban League. He has brought the same enthusiasm and skill to the Urban League, and in his first years of leadership has initiated new, revitalizing programs aimed at addressing the most pressing problems for black Americans.

Sylvia Cyrus, executive director said, "We're delighted to have such a giant as Marc Morial to serve as our luncheon speaker, Dr. Carter G. Woodson would be very proud of this line-up this year, as we honor some of those outstanding businesses who have been empowered with the blessings of entrepreneurship genius, even during these tough times."

ASALH is a recognized leader in the community and in keeping with its mission to disseminate knowledge about the history of Africans and peoples of African descent. The road to freedom and progress for African Americans is paved with stories of outstanding persons who sacrificed much to make America live up to its promise of freedom and justice for all. The more we know about our history, the stronger we are as a nation.

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