

Civil Rights Awardees—Mayor Kasim Reed, Presenter

I am honored to have the privilege of presenting Drum Major for Justice Awards to the next three recipients. All not only are Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients, all embody the positive harnessing of drum major instinct for justice that Dr. King, the first African American to win the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977, embraced and epitomized.

Our first recipient of the 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Civil Rights is Ambassador Andrew Young. Awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1981, he directed his drum major instinct into an enduring humanitarian legacy during which he served as a top aide to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the civil rights movement. An ordained minister, Ambassador Young served as the first Black U.S. Congressman from Georgia and as US Ambassador to the United Nations during the Carter Administration and was awarded the Olympic Order, the highest award from the International Olympic Committee in 1996. A tireless advocate for social and economic justice, he was two-term mayor of the City of Atlanta. During his tenure, he helped attract 1100 new businesses, 70 billion dollars in private investments and create one million jobs. Today, Ambassador Young is founding principal and chair of GoodWorks International an organization that embraces his long-held mission of facilitating economic development in the Caribbean and Africa. SCLC Women is honored to present its 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Civil Rights is Ambassador Andrew Young.

Our next awardee of the 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Civil Rights is Reverend Doctor Joseph E. Lowery. Since the 1940's, Dr. Lowery has been beating the drums for justice on the front line of the civil rights movement. A leader in school desegregation and integration of buses and public accommodations and early founder and sustainer of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, his servant leadership continued as SCLC's Chairman, President and CEO from 1977 to 1998. There, he maintained his role in the struggle for human and civil rights epitomized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the other tireless leaders in the struggle for equality and justice. A retired United Methodist Church minister who was named one of Ebony magazine's fifteen (15) greatest preachers in America, and author of "Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land", he delivered the Benediction at President Barack Obama's Inauguration. In 2009, following the tradition of Dr. King and Ambassador Young, Rev. Lowery received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in honor of his commitment to social justice and freedom. In recognition of his lifelong contribution to humankind and the leadership and the dedication he has shown throughout his life of service, SCLC Women is proud to present the Drum Major for Justice Award for Civil Rights to Reverend Dr. Joseph E. Lowery.

Our final recipient of the 2011 Drum major for Justice Award for Civil Rights is Congressman John Lewis, who, this year, also received a Presidential Medal of Freedom. Congressman Lewis harnessed the drum major instinct for justice beginning as a youth in the civil rights movement. He loudly beat the drums of justice, organizing student-led sit-in demonstrations at segregated Nashville, Tennessee lunch counters and participating in the Freedom Rides in 1961. He displayed early in the Movement the fierce servant heart embodied in Dr. King's drum major vision that would become the hallmark of his public service career. From 1963 to 1966, he served as Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), coordinating its voter registration drives in 1964 Mississippi during Freedom Summer. In 1965, he and notable civil rights leader, Hosea Williams, led 600 protestors in a peaceful, orderly march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. Yet, that would become known as "Bloody Sunday" as the marchers were attacked by Alabama state troopers. Congressman Lewis went on to win election to the Atlanta City Council in 1981 and Congress in 1986 as U.S. Representative of Georgia's Fifth Congressional District where he remains as Senior Chief Deputy Whip for the Democratic Party in the

House and a member of the House Ways and Means Committee. In honor of his lifetime fighting for freedom and justice, SCLC Women is pleased to award to Congressman John Lewis its 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Civil Rights.

Strengthening the Family Award—Dr. James K. Bennett, Presenter

Dr. Bill Releford has channeled his drum major instinct into aggressively addressing health care disparities among African American men so they can be healthy and available to their families. Increasingly frustrated with how hard it was to reach many African American men with preventative healthcare measures, he decided to take health care to his brothers and get them screened in the a setting comfortable to them...THE BARBERSHOP. In October 2007, he launched the Black Barbershop Outreach Program with a mission to SCREEN, EDUCATE, and REFER men to local health care resources. Since beginning, the program has screened over 30,000 men in 26 cities in over 475 black-owned barbershops. Its goal for 2011 is to screen over 25,000 men in 50 cities in over 750 barbershops. To address the lack of awareness about healthy food choices and the consequence of developing diabetes and other chronic diseases, Dr. Releford wrote, "The 5 Colors a Day to Better Health". A drum major for healthy families through healthy African American men, Dr. Releford's goal with the BBHOP is to screen over half-million men in 2012 to help address the disproportionate number of African American men with undetected cardiovascular disease. In honor of his being a drum major for African American men's health and strong families, SCLC Women takes great pleasure in presenting a 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Strengthening the Family to Dr. Bill Releford.

Strengthening the Family Award—Ms. Yvette Moyo-Gillard, Presenter

Our next Strengthening the Family Award is presented to Real Men Cook, a charity that has created the largest family celebration in the country since it launched in 1990. Now in its 20th year, Real Men Cook is comprised of average dads and father figures, leading celebrities and public officials—including Eddie and Gerald Levert , who hosted Real Men Cook for two years and Marc Morial, former mayor of New Orleans and current president of the National Urban League who has cooked, served and hosted Real Men Cook. Embodying the spirit of Dr. King’s servant leadership, these men have employed their drum major instinct by serving as volunteer cooks and serving food in their communities annually on Father’s Day. But, real Men Cook doesn’t just focus on the biological father, but men who also make a difference in families and communities. Like the drum major spirit properly directed, the reach and spirit of Real Men Cook goes far beyond the ten cities the event is held, where proceeds benefit nonprofits in those cities. It influences and creates family services and celebration throughout the country, in the Bahamas, on the continent of Africa, in London and Paris. In recognition of their contribution to the strengthening the African American family, SCLC Women is proud to present a 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Strengthening the Family to Real Men Cook.

First African American All Female Flight Crew Award—Ms. Scarlet Pressley Brown, Presenter

The “First African American All Female Flight Crew Award” goes to four women who embraced their drum major instinct to make flight history. All heeded the call to excellence early in life.

Captain Rachelle Jones who says, “I hadn’t ever seen anyone who looked like me before who was a pilot”, heard a friendly challenge in her friend’s suggestion she attend flight training, responding, “I can do that!” The then Delta Airlines Customer Service Agent and Georgia State University graduate completed flight school in 2003, going to work for Atlanta’s Flight Safety. Like a determined drum major, she wanted to be first. Using some savvy networking, Capt. Jones earned a position flying Corporate Jets for a year but because her dream was to fly for a commercial carrier, she enrolled in jet-specific training. She was hired as First Officer by Atlanta’s Atlantic Southeast Airlines in 2005, becoming its first African American captain and one of only 10 in the nation, in 2008.

First Officer Stephanie Grant’s drum major instinct was manifested in similar ambitions. Majorly influenced by her cousin and mentor, Herman Samuels, a retired American Airlines Captain, the Hampton University alum and US Army veteran went to flight school where she made her first landing in 2004 and graduated in 2007. Her continued desire to serve led her, briefly, to teach others how to fly. In 2008, she was hired by Atlantic Southeast Airlines where she works toward her captain’s wings to become the airline’s second African American female captain.

Flight Attendant Diana Galloway’s global ambitions are inherent. Born in Manchester England, she was raised in the Caribbean and Brooklyn, New York, moving to Atlanta in 1998. Her drum major instinct drove her to see the world so she made that dream reality in 2000 by joining Atlantic Southeast Airlines and gaining worldwide flight benefits. Inspired by a continuum of highly motivated women who have achieved great things through hard work, the married mother of three and grandmother is working diligently on writing and publishing her first murder/mystery novel.

Flight Attendant Robin Rogers was always encouraged to reach high, especially by her CDC chemist, uncle and mentor. She channeled her drum major instinct into working diligently to achieve her goals, which led to her becoming a flight attendant, after meeting an African American man in that role. “After talking to him,” she says, “I thought: I can do that.” Though hectic, she commutes from Birmingham, Alabama to Atlanta for work. But, Rogers finds it worthwhile because not only does she daily meet and work with a variety of fascinating people, being one of a history-making flight crew is “Spectacular.”

These four women are spectacular, indeed, and in recognition of their historical achievement, SCLC Women’s takes enormous pride in awarding them the Drum Major for Justice First African American All Female Flight Crew Award.

Drum Major for Justice Award in the Arts to Jasmine Guy—Presented by Kenny Leon

Most of us here tonight remember the iconic character, southern belle, “Whitley Gilbert”, on the *Cosby Show* spinoff, *A Different World*, created by our next awardee, Ms. Jasmine Guy. But Jasmine Guy’s body of work, an expression of her “be the best” drum major instinct, goes far beyond that character for which she won six consecutive NAACP Image Awards and numerous other honors. She is an extraordinary dancer, actor, singer, director and writer, who performs in multiple mediums. . As director and choreographer for the stage, Jasmine’s credits includes productions of *For Colored Girls* with Nicole Ari Parker and Robin Givens; *The Bluest Eye* at Spellman College and *I Dream*, the world-premiere musical/opera about the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. Her stage work includes *The Wiz*, *Leader of the Pack*, *Grease* and *Chicago*, in which she starred as “Velma Kelly”. She has been director and choreographer and is Producing Director for my own True Color’s Theater Company here in Atlanta where she lives with her daughter. It is, therefore, my absolute pleasure and honor to present to Ms. Jasmine Guy SCLC Women’s 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award in the Arts!

Drum Major for Justice Award in the Arts to Derek “Bentley” Watkins—Presented by Mrs. Faune Chambers Watkins

The drum major spirit drives this next 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award recipient, my husband, Mr. Derek “Fonzworth Bentley” Watkins, to among other things, change “COOL”. He believes getting a good education is “COOL”, dressing appropriately for the occasion is “COOL”, giving back to your community is “COOL” and respecting others is “COOL”. A brilliant businessman as well as entertainer, he supports his strategy with a number of projects that are all designed and consistently enforced by the “Bentley” brand. The evolution of his journey began in Fall, 2007, with his first book, *Advance Your Swagger: How to Use manners, Confidence and Style to Get Ahead*. It continued in 2008 and 2009 with his hit TV Show, “From G’s to Gents”. Creating a loyal fan-base through his motivational speeches, lifestyle book, tv show and, now, positive music, his debut album, *CoolOutRageousLoversOfUniquelyRawStyle (C.O.L.O.U.R.S.)* drops this year, supported by a Summer 2011 Music Tour. For his service to the human spirit by delivering the total entertainment package through music, dance, acting, fashion and speaking engagements, SCLC Women proudly presents to Derek “Fonzworth Bentley” Watkins its 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award in the Arts.

Building Strong African American Farmers Award—Mr. Ralph Paige, Presenter

A true drum major for justice for over 40 years, Mrs. Shirley Sherrod achieved some major firsts by harnessing her drum major instinct on behalf of America's black farmers. In the 1960's, Sherrod and her husband helped form several land trusts in Southwest Georgia. Sherrod then co-founded what would become the a laboratory and model for Community Land Trusts. New Communities, Inc., a collective farm located in Lee County Georgia, a 6,000 acre project on the largest tract of black-owned land in America, was designed to provide an equitable and sustainable model of affordable housing and community development while providing African American farmers the opportunity to farm land securely and affordably. Later serving on the Rural Development Leadership network, in 2009, Sherrod served with the USDA as the Georgia State Director of Rural Development. Though racially charged allegations that were unfounded force her resignation from that position in July 2010, Mrs. Sherrod remains a drum major for justice. Therefore, in recognition of her achievements, it is my honor to present to Mrs. Shirley Sherrod the 2011 Drum Major for Justice Award for Building Strong African American Farmers.