

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Updated March 16, 2007

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AFRO-LATINA LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS CELEBRATE WOMEN'S MONTH AT THE ANNUAL WOMEN OF POWER CONFERENCE II IN NEW YORK CITY & BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Presented by
THE GLOBAL AFRO LATINO AND CARIBBEAN INITIATIVE (GALCI) and
THE FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS CARIBBEAN CULTURAL CENTER AFRICAN DIASPORA INSTITUTE
(CCCADI)

New York, NY, March 10, 2007. The Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute and the Global Afro Latino and Caribbean Initiative collaboratively present the 2007 Annual Women of Power Conference II in New York City and Boston Massachusetts. The three-day conference will consist of a series of panel discussions, luncheons and networking events. The Women of Power Conference II has invited 12 women leaders and activists of the African Diaspora to participate as panelists in this international conference. The series of panel discussions that are free and open to the public begins Wednesday, March 21, 2007 from 5pm – 8pm with the panel “*Why We are Activists?*” at the Ida K. Lang Recital Hall, Room 424 Hunter North, Hunter College CUNY 695 Park Avenue NYC 10021 (Enter on 69th Street between Lexington and Park Avenue). Continues on Thursday with “*The Role of Afro-Latinas in Framing a Paradigm for Transforming the Conditions of our Communities*” at CUNY Graduate Center, room: Concourse Level # C-203-205, 365 5th Avenue (cross street: 34th St) NYC 10016 and concludes Friday, March 23, 2007 from 6pm – 8pm with “*Afro Latinas: Who are we? What We Do and Why?*” at the YWCA of Boston, 140 Clarendon Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116.

The Women of Power international conference was collaboratively created in by CCCADI and GALCI to create an active dialogue amongst Afro-Descendant women leaders and activists regarding the many issues women face in today's world. To continue this international exchange the 2007 WOP II conference will focus on the personal stories of sixteen Afro-Latina leaders and activists from across the Americas - and invites the public to join them in this dynamic and extraordinary series. There are many Afro-Latina's across the globe working and making strides for their communities yet little tends to be known of their own personal struggles and triumphs. As issues that confront our communities are addressed it is also important to understand the commitment and sacrifices required of those who assume the responsibility of assuring social, racial and cultural equity for all.

The objective of this annual series is to share information across generations and professional disciplines of audiences who are interested in the concerns impacting the lives of communities of African ancestry. The limited opportunities available for international gatherings of Afro Latina/o communities are rare. Therefore we see the program Women of Power as an opportunity for us all to inform each other of our work, accomplishments, defeats and progressive work agenda for the future.

The panel discussions during the 2007 conference will focus on the following themes: What does it take to be an activist? What have been the joys and sorrows of doing activist work? What are the critical issues facing Afro-Latina activists? How can bridging Afro-Latinas in the Diaspora enhance the work being done?

March 21, 2007, 5pm – 8pm

“Afro Latinas: Why We are Activists!”

Ida K. Lang Recital Hall, Room 424 Hunter North, Hunter College CUNY 695 Park Avenue NYC 10021
(Enter on 69th Street between Lexington and Park Avenue)

-cosponsored by GALCI & CCCADI

March 22nd, 2007, 6pm – 8pm

“The Role of Afro Latinas in Framing a Paradigm for Transforming the Conditions of Our Communities”

The Graduate Center, Room: Concourse Level #C-203-205, The City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue at 34th Street, New York, NY 10016-4309

--Hosted by Institute for Research on the African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean (IRADAC), GALCI & CCCADI

March 23, 2007, 6pm – 8:30pm

“Afro Latinas: Who are We? What We Do and Why?”

YWCA of Boston, 140 Clarendon Street Boston, MA 02116

For more information contact Yvette Modestin for more info. on Boston events at Phone: (617) 522-8755 or lapolitica@msn.com

-Hosted by Encuentro Diaspora Afro and co-sponsored with GALCI & CCCADI

Panels made possible through the generous support of the Ford Foundation and Inter-American Foundation. Free and Open to the Public. For further information please visit www.cccadi.org, or call 212-307-7420, x3006.

About The Global Afro Latino and Caribbean Initiative (GALCI) a program at Hunter College -- CUNY in collaboration with the Franklin H. Williams African Diaspora Institute and Caribbean Cultural Center of New York (CCCADI). Created in October 2000, the objectives of GALCI has been to make the lives of more than 150 million African Descendants in Latin America, Central and the Caribbean visible and part of the international dialogue, programmatic agenda of global multilateral organizations, as well as part of public and private policy initiatives of global governments that are home to this vast population. It is the objective and mission of GALCI to provide a public forum to educate, research, and develop thematic programs on Afro Latino and Caribbean issues highlighting the conditions of these communities.

The Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute was founded by Dr. Marta Moreno Vega in 1976 from an outgrowth of her Rockefeller Foundation grant research to identify previously undocumented collections of Caribbean art in the U.S. and Caribbean. Today, it is one of the few cultural groups that has moved from success to success to become one of New York's leading cultural groups dedicated to documenting, celebrating and sharing the cultural heritage of people of African descent, through multidisciplinary programs such as concerts, lectures, workshops, art exhibitions and conferences. Since its founding, audiences young and old throughout NYC and the surrounding tri-state area have been enlightened and enriched by the Center's education programs, concerts, lectures, workshops, visual art exhibitions, international forums and resources.

Panelists:

Epsy Campbell Barr from Costa Rica is a human rights activist, dedicated to public service and is also a university professor and an economist. Ms. Campbell Barr ran for Vice-President in the February Costa Rican national elections as a candidate of the Accion Ciudadana political party. Epsy has devoted herself to promoting the rights of women and people of African descent. Ms. Campbell Barr was named the best legislator of the national congress in Costa Rica in a recent public opinion poll.

Angelica Beatriz Ramirez Abella from Uruguay has been very involved with the black population in Uruguay for over thirty years. She founded programs for street children and co-founded Mundo Afro. In 1996 she was responsible for the management of Red de Mujeres (women's network) in the Latin American region. In 1997 Mrs. Ramirez Abella founded and led the first cooperative for women of African descent in Uruguay. She also co-founded Alianza Estrategica ("Strategic Alliance") in Costa Rica. Since the year 2000 she has been part of a network of teachers of the Instituto Superior de Formacion Afro which also teaches about issues pertaining to gender, ethnicity, and class. This network extends to Chile as well.

Ana Irma Lassen from Puerto Rico is a feminist activist since the early seventies and is a prominent human rights activists. She is a co-founder in Puerto Rico of several important organizations in the defense of the rights of women, of the fight against the racism, and the right to sexual orientation. Among her more recent publications, *Women of African Descent and Human Rights*, included in Counterpoint, an anthology of race in Puerto Rico published in 2005.

Marta Moreno Vega is the Founder and President of the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute and co-director of GALCI (Global Initiative of Afro Latin and Caribbean Organizations) a program of Hunter College/Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program.

Marinievas Alba is an activist, educator, writer, and media professional who uses the arts and culture as a platform for inspiring and creating social change. Marinievas is best known as a youth advocate, cultural worker, and Founding Director of the International Hip-Hop Exchange (IHX). She is a member of Afro-Puerto Rican performance ensemble Alma Moyo and all-female ensemble, Yaya, which promotes the African musical legacies of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

Yvette Modestin was born and raised in Colon, Republic of Panama. Yvette is the Founder/Director of Encuentro Diaspora Afro in Boston, MA. She is best known as a community activist and advocate for battered women with a focus on Latinas and Immigrants. She is currently the Diaspora Representative on the Commission of the Red de Mujeres AfroLatinoAmericanas, Afrocaribenas y de la Diaspora. Yvette was profiled by the Boston Globe and named "The Uniter" for her work in bringing the Latin American and African American community together, and for her activism in building a voice for the Afro-Latino community.

Miriam Victoria Gomes of Argentina is a Professor of Literature, docent and researcher of African literature and African diaspora history and culture. Ms. Gomes is Vice-President of the "Capeverdean Union" Mutual Aid Society.

Shirley Campbell Barr from Costa Rico is an independent consultant working at HIV/BEEN, Reproductive Health and Human Rights. She has two collections of poetry published and her work has appeared in diverse anthologies and magazines in Costa Rica, Cuba, USA, El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia and Jamaica.

Diva Moreira from Brazil is social communicator and political scientist. She is an activist deeply involved in the black social movements of Brazil. As a researcher, she has conducted several studies in focused on race in Brazil.

Vania Penha-Lopes is native of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is an associate professor of sociology at Bloomfield College, in New Jersey.

MariElba Torres from Puerto Rico is a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Recinto de Rio Piedras. She is an advisor to the Municipality of Caguas, Puerto Rico for the development of community arts markets and is co-director of the biannual Symposium "The Presence of African based Cultural and Spiritual in the Caribbean and Latin-America".

Evelyne Laurent-Perrault is a human rights activist born and raised in Venezuela of Haitian and Venezuelan family. She has worked in non-profit organizations and as a Professional College Administrator, and is "ENCUENTRO, Inc.", whose main purpose is to highlight the contributions of the African Diaspora, with an emphasis in Latin America. Evelyne is married to Ronel Perrault and mother of Stella and Maia Perrault.