

## WALKER INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS GROUP, INC.

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### **“African Diaspora Women Celebrate Women’s History Month in NY at annual Women of Power Conference hosted by Caribbean Cultural Center”**

NEW YORK, March \_\_, 2006— Join Susan L. Taylor, Editorial Director of *Essence* magazine as she hosts the Women in Power Conference presented by The Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center/African Diaspora Institute (CCC/ADI) in collaboration with Global Afro-Latino & Caribbean Initiative at Hunter College (GALCI). One of the leading Afro Latina public figures with worldwide recognition Epsy Campbell, a recent vice-presidential candidate of Costa Rica, is one of the many prominent speakers who will be in attendance. The Women in Power Conference created by CCC/ADI in collaboration with GALCI is an international conference gathering women who represent an expanding of Afro-Latino /Caribbean/American women who have entered public life. “*The Women of Power Conference* is a networking initiative to enhance our concerns making the issues faced by women, children, families and communities of African descendants a global issue. The linking of African descendant women with similar visions in an international gathering will contribute to making these concerns and needs visible to each other and broader communities” says Dr. Marta Moreno Vega, founder and president of the board of CCC/ADI.

This important gathering will highlight the increasing era of women decision makers on a global level. Afro Latino, Afro Caribbean and Afro American women engaged in public life as government officials and policymakers will gather to share their thoughts on the national and international issues impacting the lives of people of color. The first female president of Liberia in an interview with *Essence Magazine* says, “Women play a huge role in promoting peace. We must now give women a much bigger role in society, putting them in positions of authority and responsibility”. Susan L. Taylor, Editorial Director for *Essence* magazine will host a special invitation only luncheon for these women among several activities taking place to honor women in power. Featured attendees include such notables as Ms. Mena Garcia, founder if the Consejo Colombiano de Mujeres Negras, COMUN,(The Colombian Council of Black Women), and co-founder of the Ethnic Movement of Black Women; Epsy Campbell Barr, vice presidential candidate of Costa Rica; and Dorotea Wilson a prominent leader in Nicaragua.

*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. CCC will celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year-2006 with extraordinary programs that both reflect and improve on its past successes.

*The Global Afro Latino and Caribbean Initiative (GALCI)* is 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.

#### **LIST OF ACTIVITIES/SCHEDULE**

##### **Mar 22. Press Event –9-11am**

Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center/African Diaspora Institute  
408 West 58<sup>th</sup> Street  
(Between 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues)

*\*In collaboration with GALCI*

**Mar 22. Panel Discussion –2-4pm**

*“Relevance of Forging Lasting Connections between Afro-Descendent Communities in the Americas with Our Communities in the United States and the importance of emerging issues of Afro-Latinos part of the national and international dialogue.”*

CUNY Graduate Center  
365 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (34<sup>th</sup> Street)  
Room c201-c202

*\*In collaboration with the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies, Graduate Center, CUNY; GALCI*

**Mar 22. Prospero’s Book reading and Reception - 6:30 pm**

*In Honor of author, Dr. Elizabeth Nunez & Women of Power Conference Guests*

Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center/African Diaspora Institute  
408 West 58<sup>th</sup> Street  
(Between 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues)

*\*In collaboration with GALCI*

**Mar 23. Breakfast Event (invitation only)**

*“Race and Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean”*

*Guest Speakers: Sergia Galvan and Epsy Campbell Barr*

Council on Foreign Relations

The Harold Pratt House  
58 East 68<sup>th</sup> Street

*\*In collaboration GALCI*

**Mar 24. International Networking Brunch Event (invitation only) 10am – 1pm**

In Collaboration with Essence Magazine

Channel Thirteen/WNET Studios

450 W. 33rd Street

*\*In collaboration with GALCI*

**Mar 24. Roundtable of Women of Power: 4-7pm**

*“From Community Organizing to Electoral Politics”*

The Ida K. Lang Recital Hall

Hunter College, CUNY

695 Park Avenue

Room 424

(Enter on 68<sup>th</sup> street)

*\*In collaboration with GALCI*

**March 25. Panel discussion: 4-7 pm**

*“The Expanding Role of Afro Descendent Women Policymakers in the Americas”*

York College, CUNY

94-20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Room 1M07 in the Academic Core Bldg.

Jamaica, NY 11451

(E train to Jamaica Center Parsons/Archer stop)

*\*Co-sponsored by Congressman Gregory Meeks; York College, CUNY; GALCI and CCC*

The Caribbean Global Afro Latino and Caribbean Initiative programs are made possible with the generous donations and support of: Douglas X. Patiño, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Dept. of Cultural Affairs, New York City Dept. of Youth and Community Development, New York State Black and Puerto Rican/Hispanic Caucus, The Hearst Foundation, The Emma Shafer Charitable Trust, C.S. Mott Foundation, Marguerite Casey Foundation, PepsiCo, Community Wellness Foundation and Bloomberg.

## **Participants Bios**

### **Epsy Campbell Barr**

Epsy Campbell Barr 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. She is a member of the forum for social equity of the Inter-American Development Bank and of the continental organization of the Inter-American Dialogue of the Center for Afro-descendent Women (Centro de Mujeres Afro-descendientes) and of the Organization of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin American women (Red de Mujeres Afro-caribenas y Afro-Latinoamericanas).

### **Sergia Galván**

Ms. Galvan is the director of the Collective for Women and Health [Colectiva Mujer y Salud] in the Dominican Republic. She and her organization work towards raising awareness among women's organizations, networks, groups and associations regarding the key elements of the law on social security and health from a rights-based perspective. Ms. Galvan is the recipient of a bachelors degree in education from the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo (UASD), with a specialization in Women's Studies from the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana de Mexico. Currently she is the director of public policy of the Secretary of State of Women in the Dominican Republic. Her experience includes representing the Dominican Republic before several international organisms (OAS, the UN's Commission for the social condition of women and the inter-American executive commission for women's issues (CIM/OAS).

### **Dorotea Wilson**

Dorotea Wilson, is a prominent leader in Nicaragua's "Atlantic Coast Autonomous Region" and a member of the Sandinista National Executive. The region was established in 1986, granting land rights and self-government to members of Nicaragua's Indigenous and Creole peoples in the ethnically distinct Atlantic Coast area. The region is now recognized as a semi-autonomous under the Nicaraguan constitution. Ms Wilson played a prominent role in the establishment of the region and in fighting for the rights of the country's indigenous population. She has also served as the Mayor of Puerto Cabezas, one of the major cities on the Atlantic Coast, a member of the National Parliament and the government of the Autonomous Region. She advocates for the rights of women of color in general and those from rural areas in particular. She has written articles on the history of Nicaragua from the point of view of the oppressed.

### **Dr. Elizabeth Nunez**

Dr. Elizabeth Nunez is a CUNY Distinguished Professor of English at Medgar Evers College, the City University of New York. She received her Ph.D. in English from New York University. Dr. Nunez has authored six novels: Prospero's Daughter; Grace; Discretion; Bruised Hibiscus; Beyond the Limbo Silence; and When Rocks Dance. She is also co-editor of the anthology Stories from Blue Latitudes: Caribbean Women Writers at Home and Abroad. A former fellow at Yaddo and MacDowell colonies, cofounder of the National Black Writers Conference, and director from 1986-2000, Elizabeth Nunez currently chairs the PEN American Center Open Book program. She is executive producer of the CUNY TV series Black Writers in America, currently on PBS stations across the country. For more information, visit Nunez's web site at [www.elizabethnunez.com](http://www.elizabethnunez.com).

### **Ivete Sacramento**

#### **UNEB- Magnifica Reitora**

Professor Sacramento has a Master's Degree in Education from Rio de Janeiro's Olavo Bilac University in conjunction with the Universite de Quebec, Canada (1990). From 1980-1984, Professor Sacramento was Supervising Director for the Bahian Higher Education Institute, an institution that would be replaced by the Bahian State University, (UNEB). As a professor of Portuguese language and literature Sacramento started her teaching career in Bahia in 1972 and became interested in developing extension courses for teachers living and working outside of the municipal state capital of Salvador, Bahia. This interest in rural education and extension campuses is the hallmark of her directorship at the Bahian State University, where she established satellite campuses throughout Bahia State, and implemented the widest affirmative action and quotas campaign in the history of Brazilian higher education. Her courage as an educator, innovator, and social activist has earned her international support and recognition, particularly among African Descendant populations throughout the Americas, Africa, and Europe.

### **Angelica Beatriz Ramirez Abella**

Mrs. Ramirez Abella has been very involved with the black population in Uruguay for over thirty years. In 1972 she became involved in different youth movements and in 1984 she was the director of the Social and Cultural Association

of Uruguay. 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. Another of her most notable endeavor was an evaluation of the condition of the Afro Uruguayan women, the first one ever. 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. In addition to her active participation in international forums and projects has been part of anti-discriminatory campaigns in Montevideo, Uruguay.

### **Maria Elisa Velazquez Gutierrez**

Mrs. Velazquez Gutierrez is a recipient of a bachelor's degree in sociology from the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico and a Doctorate in Anthropology from the Escuela Nacional de Antropologia e Historia. She is a full time researcher in the Direccion de Etnologia y Antropologia Social (Social Anthropology and Ethnology Center), which is part of the Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia. She has been the coordinator of its permanent curriculum "Poblaciones y Culturas de Origen Africano en Mexico" (Cultures and Communities of African Origin in Mexico) since 1997. She is also a Graduate school professor at the Maestria en Museos de la Universidad Iberoamericana. In addition to her participation in international forums and conferences Ms. Velazquez Gutierrez has published a book on the life of a Mexican mulato painter of the seventeenth century. She has authored other books such as "Poblaciones y Culturas de Origen Africano en Mexico" and the prize winner "Mujeres de la Capital Novohispana, siglos XVII y XVIII".

**Zulia Mena García** was born in Quibdo, in the Chocó region of Colombia. She received a degree in Social Work from the Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó and specialized in social management at the INDES in Washington D.C. Ms. Mena Garcia is the founder if the Consejo Colombiano de Mujeres Negras, COMUN,(The Colombian Council of Black Women), and co-founder of the Ethnic Movement of Black Women. She has served as advisor of the Territorial Afro-Chocó Collective and as a consultant for ethnic and social projects. She has also served as advisor to Choco's governor on issues of ethnicity and culture. In addition, Ms. Mena Garcia has participated intensively in national and international forums and conferences on race and ethnicity and the rights of African descendant women, and has published extensively on issues related to women's rights, ethnicity, culture, territorial rights, racism and the Colombian armed conflict. Ms. Mena Garcia has been recognized widely for her community activism and her professional achievements.

### **Nirva Rosa Camacho Parra**

Nirva Rosa Camacho Parra was born in La Sabana, State of Vargas, Venezuela. She received a degree in Clinical Psychology from the Universidad Nacional Experimental Simon Rodríguez, in Caracas. She is a specialist in family counseling and education, and works as a Psychologist at the Centro de Desarrollo Infantil (Center for child development) at La Guaira. Prior to this position she served as Executive Secretary at the Fundación Instituto La Mujer (Women Institute Foundation) in the State of Vargas. Ms. Camacho- Parra has participated extensively in workshops and women's forums addressing the situation of Afro-Venezuelans and issues such as economy and women; human relations, leadership and authority, and issues related to genre and politics. She is a member of the Cumbre Nacional de Mujeres Afrodescendientes and of the Red de Mujeres de Vargas and has served as coordinator of the network of Afro-Venezuelan organizations and as organizer and presenter of the National Conference of Afro-descendant Women, from 2001 through 2005. Ms. Camacho Parra has also participated in international conferences and conventions including the Third World Conference against Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia in Durban-South Africa in 2001, and the Americas Conference in Chile in 2000. She has also co authored various articles and books on race, ethnicity and culture, including Afrovenezolanidad, Racismo e Interculturalidad.