



African-American Male Initiative

"Creating A More Educated Georgia"

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LEADERS RECOGNIZED FOR SUPPORTING BLACK MALE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

KENNESAW, Ga. — Six leading educators who have demonstrated unwavering commitment to educating African-American males were saluted this evening at a major statewide conference sponsored by the University System of Georgia (USG) on the campus of Kennesaw State University.

The Awards and Recognition Dinner event served as the kickoff for the USG's Inaugural African-American Male Initiative (AAMI) Best Practices Conference, which runs through Saturday at 5:30 p.m. The two-day conference is aimed at sharing outcomes and best practices resulting the USG's five-year-long initiative aimed at increasing the recruitment, retention and graduation of Black males from the state's 35 public colleges and universities.

Three of the six honorees were presented with the "AAMI Best Practices Leadership Award" for their development, implementation and operation of highly successful programs within the USG that have enhanced educational outcomes for Black males at both the K-12 and college levels. In addition, three nationally recognized honorees were presented with individualized awards acknowledging their unique contributions in support of the USG's efforts and the mission of the AAMI project.

"These honorees have demonstrated the vision, commitment and tenacity that are sorely needed in addressing the complex and pervasive educational challenges faced by young Black men today, said AAMI Project Director Arlethia Perry-Johnson. "The University System is extremely grateful for their leadership and support, and we commend them for the strides and achievements they have made with this important work."

The following honorees received awards at the Inaugural AAMI Best Practices Conference:

- **Dr. Asa G. Hilliard, III** (awarded posthumously) was presented with "**The Legacy Award**" for his stellar research on the educational achievements and capabilities of minority students. The internationally renowned historian, distinguished professor, and educational psychologist in the College of Education at Georgia State, contributed significantly to the launching of AAMI by informing the research agenda and delivering presentations to task force subcommittees. Hilliard dedicated his life to presenting positive depictions of the African-American community. Dr. Hilliard's widow, the Honorable Patsy Jo Hilliard, and his daughter, Dr. Patricia Hilliard-Nunn, accepted the award in his honor.

- **Dr. William E. Cox**, president & CEO of *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* (formerly *Black Issues In Higher Education*), was presented with “**The Impact Award**” for his many years of showcasing and supporting the University System of Georgia’s minority educational outreach efforts. Cox served as a member of the USG’s Task Force on Enhancing Access for African-American Males, and produced several feature articles on the USG’s AAMI efforts that helped to position the AAMI as a national benchmark. Cox’s publication also annually documents the impact of several USG institutions in producing high numbers of African-American college graduates.
- **Regent Elridge W. McMillan**, president emeritus of the Southern Education Foundation, Inc., and scholar-in-residence at Atlanta Metropolitan College, was recognized with “**The Advocacy Award**” for his unyielding advocacy of minority educational programs within the USG. McMillan spoke out courageously, encouraging the Board of Regents to dedicate attention and resources to the AAMI on the heels of the task force’s report in 2003. Since that time he has worked tirelessly in support of the program, presenting at national conferences, conducting media interviews and working in his board role to ensure the provision of resources to fulfill the purpose and mission of the AAMI.

AAMI Best Practice Leadership Award recipients:

- **Dorothy L. Lord**, president of Coastal Georgia Community College (Brunswick, Ga.), was recognized for her pioneering efforts in creating and administering the college’s “Minority Outreach Program.” Lord launched the program 14 years ago, when in her initial years as president of the institution, she was dismayed by the paucity of Black males receiving degrees at the college’s commencement exercises. The program provides three weeks of college exposure to rising eighth graders in the college’s service area. As a member of the USG’s AAMI task force, Lord decided to expand her efforts, creating the “Torchbearers” program to enhance retention of Black males on the campus.
- **Dr. Deryl F. Bailey**, associate professor and program coordinator of the school counseling master’s degree program at the University of Georgia, was recognized for his highly successful work as founder and director of Empowered Youth Programs (Gentlemen on the Move, Young Women Scholars, and Parents of Empowered Youth). Bailey has conducted his work with young African-American men in three states, beginning as a guidance counselor in North Carolina; continuing in Virginia, where he earned his doctorate; and now in Georgia, where his work has earned national recognition, research publications and expanded funding support.
- **Dr. Said L. Sewell**, associate professor of political science and planning at the University of West Georgia, was recognized for his visionary leadership as director of the Center for African-American Male Research, Success, and Leadership, which administers the “Black Men With Initiative” program at the university. The multi-faceted program provides leadership development and learning community activities for African-American males enrolled at the university that enhance their educational performance, campus involvement and retention. Recently, the program has expanded to include a

mentoring initiative for a class of local middle-school students, and an international exchange program for BMWI leaders. Sewell's work has been nationally recognized.

Launched in the summer of 2002 by the University System of Georgia, AAMI focuses on increasing the enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of African-American males through a wide variety of programs that foster academic achievement, encompassing tutoring, mentoring, leadership development, and college visitations. Today there are more than 20 such programs at 16 different USG institutions focusing on the K-12 pipeline, college retention, leadership development and student life.

For more information on the recipients and the USG'S AAMI, please visit the project's website at <http://www.usg.edu/aami>. For more information on the AAMI Best Practices conference, please visit the conference website at: www.usg.edu/aami/bestpractices07/.

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