



## African-American Male Initiative

*"Creating A More Educated Georgia"*

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**Writer-Activist Kevin Powell To Lead Talks With Young Black Georgia Males**

*University System's African-American Male Initiative Sponsors Powell's Eight-City Rural-Georgia Tour to Foster "New Directions" Conversations, Empower Youth*

**KENNESAW, Ga.** — Oct. 21 – Noted writer and activist Kevin Powell will facilitate a series of conversations with young Black middle- and high-school students, when he travels to eight Georgia cities in early November, at the invitation of the University System of Georgia's (USG) African-American Male Initiative (AAMI).

The AAMI/Kevin Powell "New Directions Tour" kicks off on **Monday, November 2, at Columbus State University** in Columbus, Georgia, and will culminate at **Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Georgia on November 11**. Powell will speak to middle- and high-school students enrolled in the USG's Early College Program and college students participating in the USG's African-American Male Initiative. Public forums and book signings also will be held at designated host sites in conjunction with the tour.

Besides Columbus State University and Valdosta State University, Powell's eight-city tour will include stops at the **University of West Georgia (Nov. 3), Augusta State University (Nov. 5), Middle Georgia College (Nov. 6), Waycross College (Nov. 9), and Bainbridge College (Nov. 10)**. In addition, Powell will visit **two Atlanta-area high schools (Nov. 4)** as part of the tour – DeKalb Early College Academy, and Carver Early College, both sites of USG Early College programs.

"Kevin Powell has a gift for connecting and conversing with young Black men, and for getting them to discuss with him their possibilities for a better future," said Arlethia Perry-Johnson, project director of AAMI. "We want to inspire our students to think about 'new directions' for their lives, and we are looking forward to the strong impact we know Kevin will have in motivating our youth to achieve – both educationally and personally."

The University System of Georgia's AAMI program is housed in the External Affairs Division at Kennesaw State University. The initiative is focused on enhancing the recruitment, retention and graduation of Black males from the 35 colleges and universities which comprise the state's public higher education system. Since the program's inception in Fall 2002, the enrollment of Black males in the University System has increased by 36 percent, from 17,068

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students in fall 2002, to 23,225 in fall 2008. Black male graduation rates also have improved significantly, and improvements in retention also have been achieved.

Early Colleges are innovative and highly effective schools for students who may not be well served by traditional schools, and are traditionally underrepresented (low income, first-generation and minority) on college campuses. Early College students can earn a high school diploma with the potential to earn an associate's degree, or one to two years of transferable credit toward a bachelor's degree. Each USG Early College site is a partnership between a local school system and a USG college or university. All schools in the Initiative strive to remove the financial, academic, and psychological hurdles that prevent too many students from entering and succeeding in college.

Editor of *The Black Male Handbook* and the author of nine books, Powell offers audiences across the globe wisdom on surviving, living, and winning. He is known for his work uplifting and empowering African-American males and for addressing violence against women.

A gifted and highly sought after public speaker, Powell also has lectured on multiculturalism, building corporate responsibility, American and Black American history, the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, civil rights, American politics and civic engagement, sexism from a male perspective, leadership, social activism, the state of hip-hop, redefining American manhood, and being Black and male in America, among other topics. He has spoken at hundreds of colleges and universities, community centers, prisons, religious institutions, conferences and festivals, as well as in corporate settings. Powell also routinely offers his insights on a variety of matters to TV, radio, newspaper, magazine and Internet outlets in America, and abroad.

He has written numerous essays, articles, and reviews through the years for publications such as *Esquire*, *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post*, *Essence*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Amsterdam News* and *Vibe*, where he was a founding staff member and served as a senior writer, interviewing and profiling, among many others, General Colin Powell and the late Tupac Shakur. Powell also has been a Writing Fellow for the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, and a Phelps Stokes Fund Senior Fellow.

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For more information on the USG'S African-American Male Initiative, please visit <http://www.usg.edu/aami> . For more information on the Georgia Early College Initiative, please visit [www.gaeearlycollege.org](http://www.gaeearlycollege.org)