



Columbia Graduate School of Journalism Honors the Best in Race Reporting and Leadership

Media Contacts:

Melanie A. Farmer, Columbia University, 212-854-9082, mf2362@columbia.edu

Arlene Notoro Morgan, Associate Dean, 212-854-5377 or am494@columbia.edu

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Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Bryant Gumbel's REALsports program lead the roster of honorees in the ninth annual awards judging for the Let's Do It Better! Competition and Workshop on Journalism, Race and Ethnicity at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

The awards will be presented at a luncheon on Thursday, May 3, the leadoff event in a three-day workshop designed to showcase exemplary performance on leading and covering issues or race, ethnicity and demographic change in the United States.

The Let's Do It Better! Workshop was established in 1999 through a Ford Foundation grant to foster coherent, complete and courageous coverage of race and ethnicity in America as "an urgent journalistic duty," said Arlene Morgan, the school's associate dean who directs the competition and workshop. "The award winning work must meet the standards of voice, complexity, context and authenticity, as well as serve as a teaching tool for the newsroom managers and journalism educators who attend the workshop," added Morgan, explaining the criteria for winning.

The author of the PBS documentary and book, *Finding Oprah's Roots*, Gates is being recognized with a Special Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contributions on the understanding of race through his books, documentaries and articles. "Professor Gates has used an iconic American celebrity to teach the country a racial history lesson that, for the most part, has been ignored in our classrooms," Morgan said.

Gates, who is the W.E.B. Du Bois professor of the Humanities and chair of African and African-American Studies at Harvard University, "is not a journalist in the traditional sense,"

Morgan continued. "But the work he has done in his lifetime and on the Oprah book and documentary and his *African-American Lives* series, which aired on PBS last year, has created a compelling body of research and story telling that has probably influenced more people than any one newspaper or television story. Hundreds of people are now testing their own DNA in search of their identity. That kind of reach is what good journalism is all about."

Morgan said Gumbel, host and chief correspondent of REALSports on HBO, will receive the Broadcast Lifetime Achievement Award. His program is being cited for "outstanding journalism and leadership" in the area of inclusive reporting.

The award cites four stories that aired in 2006:

- "Rough Riders" Correspondent Mary Carillo and producer Andrew Bennet
- "In the Headlines" Correspondent Jon Frankel and producer Beein Gim
- "Native Son" Correspondent Bryant Gumbel and producer Ezra Edelman
- "More than a Game" Correspondent Bryant Gumbel and producer Lisa Bennett

"Each of the REALsports stories took the audience beyond the predictable, offering a fresh and imaginative view of not only the sports world, but the society in general," said Morgan. Noting that Gumbel often used his anchor spot on The Today Show to lead a national discussion on racially significant stories, Morgan said that she doubted that "many Americans would have seen very much on TV about the atrocities in Rwanda if Bryant Gumbel had not forced us to pay attention to that tragedy."

A third Special Recognition Award will be presented to Dr. Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez, associate professor of the journalism at the University of Texas and co-editor of *A Legacy Greater Than Words: Stories of U.S. Latinos & Latina of the World War II Generation* for her "dedication to assembling an important oral history through the voices and stories of an often overlooked part of American society."

Morgan cited Dr. Rivas-Rodriguez for overseeing the fundraising and collection of more than 500 interviews to create an archive of the contributions that Latino and Latina people contributed to victory in World War II. The archive includes interviews, mostly videotaped, digitized photographs, photocopies of discharge papers and other documents.

A 1977 graduate of the journalism school, Dr. Rivas-Rodriguez is a founding member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and a former reporter with the Boston Globe, WFAA-TV in Dallas and the Dallas Morning News.

In addition to the special awards, nine citations of excellence were awarded to:

- The Associated Press: “Men Surviving Blackness” by Erin Texeira and “No Child Education Policy Omits Minorities’ Test Scores,” a four-part series by Frank Bass, Nicole Ziegler Dizon and Ben Feller
- The New York Times: “An Iman in America,” a series by Andrea Elliott
- The New York Times Magazine: “Still Left Behind,” by Paul Tough
- The Philadelphia Inquirer: “Writing for Their Lives,” a series by Susan Snyder
- The Sacramento Bee: “Sea of Change,” a series by Stephen Magagnini, and “Hired Hands,” for beat reporting by Susan Ferriss
- The Washington Post: “Being a Black Man,” a year-long newspaper and Website series
- WRAL-TV, a Raleigh, N.C.: “Standards of Living,” an hour-long documentary on migrant labor conditions. Clay Johnson, executive producer, David Crabtree, reporter, and Jay Jennings, photographer/editor
- MaynardInstitute.org: Richard Prince's Journal-isms column

The Let’s Do It Better! award winners will present their work before an audience of editors, news directors and journalism educators who were selected to attend the workshop based on their desire to improve the diversity of their own workplaces or classrooms by using the honored work as “best practice” teaching models. The competition led to the publication of *The Authentic Voice: The Best Reporting on Race and Ethnicity* (Columbia University Press, July 2006), a compilation of 15 stories and interviews with the journalists who deconstructed their stories in a unique text, DVD and website format. Additional information on the program can be obtained from Morgan at am494@Columbia.edu or at the program’s website at <http://www.jrn.columbia.edu/events/race/>

About the Graduate School of Journalism

For almost a century, the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism has been preparing journalists in a program that stresses academic rigor, ethics, journalistic inquiry and professional practice. Founded by Joseph Pulitzer in 1912, the school offers master of science, master of arts, and doctor of philosophy degrees.

About Columbia University

Founded in 1754 as King's College, Columbia University in the City of New York is the fifth oldest institution of higher learning in the United States and today is one of the world's leading academic and research institutions. For more information about Columbia University, visit www.columbia.edu.

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