

WHITNEY M. YOUNG JR. AWARDS CELEBRATION

HONORING THE LEGACY, ADVANCING THE FUTURE

JUNE 24
2026



Los Angeles
Urban League

SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER | LOS ANGELES

EMPOWER COMMUNITIES. INSPIRE CHANGE. CREATE GENERATIONAL IMPACT.



For over a century, the Los Angeles Urban League has stood at the forefront of the fight for economic empowerment, racial justice, and community advancement. Through innovative programs in education, workforce development, entrepreneurship, housing, and civic engagement, we are shaping a brighter future for ALL underserved and under-resourced communities in Greater Los Angeles. For Young People. For Families. For Small Businesses.

INVEST IN THE MOVEMENT. DRIVE IMPACT. LEAVE A LEGACY.

There are many ways to make a meaningful impact:

Become a Recurring Donor

Fuel lasting change with monthly contributions that sustain our programs and expand our reach.

Planned Giving

Leave a legacy of empowerment by including LAUL in your estate plans. Join the John Mack Legacy Society and ensure your values live on.

Corporate Partners Advisory Council

Align your organization with a trusted mission. Collaborate, invest, and innovate for lasting social impact.

Make Your Impact Today

Together, we can transform lives, strengthen communities, and build a future where equity and opportunity are not just aspirations - but reality.

Donate at laurg.org/donate or scan the QR code below to make your gift.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Friends and Supporters:

As we gather for our **51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards Celebration**, we come together to highlight remarkable progress and lay groundwork for challenges ahead. **This year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future,"** captures who we are, what we have unapologetically dared to be, and why we must continue to lead the movement.

For more than a century the Los Angeles Urban League has stood as a cornerstone of truth, a conduit for possibility. Our cause has endured through every era and every challenge because our mission is rooted in the unwavering belief that communities prosper when systems are fair. When opportunity is shared. When partnerships move with purpose. **That momentum, built by generations of trailblazers, advocates, and everyday Angelenos propels us onward.**

This year, we return to the Skirball Cultural Center, a valued partner whose hospitality and shared commitment to understanding, culture and harmony help elevate this celebration. **Together, we honor individuals whose leadership strengthens the fabric of Los Angeles and reflects the best of Whitney M. Young Jr.'s legacy;** courage in the face of inequity, conviction in pursuit of justice, and clarity about work that awaits us ahead.

Our momentum is not abstract, it is actual. **Workforce streams that open doors to living-wage careers. Entrepreneurs acquiring tools, capital, and scalability needed to grow.** Young learners imagining futures once thought out of reach. Advocacy and collective solutions that combat inequities our communities continue to face. The output of the Urban League that spearheads the movement.

Your partnership fuels this progress. Through your generosity, we are able to build programs that do more than meet immediate needs. They strengthen community resilience, create lasting bridges, and embolden the foundation required for generational change. Together we honor the pioneers and groundbreakers who've charted paths before us while advancing a future defined by justice, dignity, and opportunity for all.



Thank you for standing with us, for believing in this work, and for helping us advance the next century of Urban League impact.

With gratitude,



Cynthia Mitchell-Heard
President & CEO
Los Angeles Urban League



WHITNEY M. YOUNG JR. AWARDS CELEBRATION

HONORING THE LEGACY, ADVANCING THE FUTURE

HONOREES



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD **JANICE BRYANT HOWROYD**

Founder & CEO, ActOne Group, First Black woman to build a billion dollar company in the U.S.



THE WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. AWARD **BRIDGID COULTER CHEADLE**

Founder, Blackbird Collective, Social Impact Entrepreneur & Philanthropist



THE JOHN W. MACK LEGACY AWARD **MICHAEL WEINSTEIN**

Founder & President, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, Housing and Health Activist, USAF Veteran



VISIONARY AWARD **JO-AN TURMAN**

Head of Global Entertainment Partnerships, Habitat for Humanity International, Dedicated Philanthropist, and Inner-city Youth Advocate



TRAILBLAZER AWARD **GLYNN TURMAN**

Emmy and Multiple Image Award-Winning Actor, Director, Cowboy and Youth Empowerment Advocate



PROGRAM

RECEPTION & RED CARPET BEGINS

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE 1..... **Dr. Dexter Story**

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE 2..... **Magatte Fall & Max Percussion**

AWARDS & CELEBRATION BEGINS

EMCEE OPENS..... **Chris Schauble, KTLA TV**

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE..... **MAKEDA**
“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

LOS ANGELES URBAN LEAGUE EXECUTIVE VIDEO

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADDRESS..... **Keith Drake**

2026 WHITNEY M. YOUNG JR. AWARD..... **Bridgid Coulter Cheadle**

DINNER SERVICE

2026 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD..... **Janice Bryant Howroyd**

TRIBUTE TO US BANK TITLE SPONSOR

SPECIAL REMARKS: MAYOR OF LOS ANGELES..... **Mayor Karen Bass**

COMMUNITY IMPACT TESTIMONIALS

PRESIDENT & CEO’S SPECIAL REMARKS..... **Cynthia Mitchell-Heard**

FUND TO CAUSE..... **Chuck Dukas**, Auctioneer
Franchesca Rodriguez, LA Urban
League Entrepreneurship Center
Outreach Program Mgr.

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE 2027 CONFERENCE

ANNOUNCEMENT VIDEO..... **Marc Morial**, President & CEO,
National Urban League

2026 JOHN W. MACK LEGACY AWARD..... **Michael Weinstein**

2026 VISIONARY AND TRAIL BLAZER AWARDS..... **Jo-An and Glynn Turman**

CLOSING REMARKS

PROGRAM CONCLUDES



Los Angeles
Urban League

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my distinct privilege to welcome you to our 51st Whitney M. Young Awards Celebration. Tonight, we gather not only to celebrate our shared achievements but to look forward to the future of the Los Angeles Urban League.

This past year has been a remarkable chapter of growth. Thanks to your unwavering support and the dedication of our community, we secured Los Angeles as the host city for the 2027 National Urban League Conference, which will take place next July at the JW Marriott Hotel, LA Live.

Our collective impact within the sectors of housing, access to health, entrepreneurship, education, workforce development, and advocacy continues to touch thousands of Angelenos on a daily basis.

Because of you, we are continuing to make a tangible difference in Los Angeles. Tonight's success relies entirely on the generosity of our donors, sponsors, partners, volunteers and YOU. Your continued support has never meant more. The Los Angeles Urban League is deeply grateful for your continuous backing.

Whether you are here as a long-time supporter or joining our gala for the first time, your presence tonight directly fuels our mission to elevate underrepresented communities in reaching their highest potential.

Please take a moment to look through this evening's booklet. You will see the incredible sponsors and partners who have made tonight possible. I encourage you to support them just as they have supported our cause, one guided by the enduring principles of Whitney M. Young Jr.

Thank you for your generosity, your partnership, and your belief in our vision. I hope you have a spectacular evening!

With deepest gratitude,

Keith Drake
Board Chair, Los Angeles Urban League



2026 AMBASSADORS



David Ford

Event Chair, LA Urban League Board Member, Distinguished Author



Kathy Ireland

Fashion Designer, Philanthropist, Entrepreneur, Former Supermodel



Jenifer Lewis

Esteemed Actress, Recipient of LA Urban League Visionary Award in 2025



Norm Nixon

2x NBA Champ, LA Urban League John Mack Legacy Award Winner In 2025



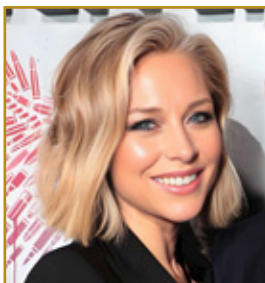
George C. Fatheree, III

Acclaimed Civil Rights Atty., 2025 LA Urban League Whitney M. Young Jr. Award Winner



Nicole Harper Rawlins

Top McDonald's Franchisee, 2025 LA Urban League Trail Blazer Award Winner



Anne Simonds

Entertainment & Techno Guru, 2024 LA Urban League John W. Mack Award Winner



Ana Guerrero

Organizational & Policy Strategist, Fractional Leader, Exec. Consultant



Ron Frierson

President & CEO, Hollywood Chamber of Commerce; Chairman, Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation



PAST HONOREES

WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. AWARD HONOREES

1971

Louis B. Lundborg

Chairman of the Board of Directors
Bank of America NT&SA

Sammy Davis, Jr.

Actor, Singer, Dancer, Mimic,
Author, Comedian, Producer,
Director

1973

John Wooden

UCLA Basketball Coach

1974

**The Honorable
Thomas Bradley**

Mayor, City of Los Angeles

1975

Norman Lear

Writer, Producer & Chairman,
Act III Communications

1976

Carl R. Hartnack

Chairman of Executive Committee
Security Pacific Corporation

1978

Paul Sullivan

Executive Vice President
Bank of America (Ret.)

1979

Edwin W. Steidle

Advisor (Former Chairman)
May Company of California

1980

Berry Gordy

Chairman of the Board
Motown Industries

1981

Robert D. Dockson

Chairman of the Board & CEO
California Federal Savings & Loan

1982

Sidney Poitier

Actor, Producer, Director

1983

William E. Kieschnick

President and CEO
ARCO

1984

Ella Fitzgerald

Award-Winning Vocalist

1985

Howard P. Allen

Chairman of the Board & CEO
Southern California Edison

1986

Quincy Jones

Composer and Producer

1987

Dionne Warwick

Star Vocalist

1989

Earvin "Magic" Johnson

Superstar Guard
Los Angeles Lakers

1990

Stevie Wonder

Renowned Singer & Songwriter

1991

Lodwrick Cook

Chairman & CEO
ARCO

1992

Nancy Wilson

Vocal Superstar, Humanitarian

1993

John W. Mack

President & CEO
Los Angeles Urban League

Bennie R. Beckwith

Vice President, Finance
Los Angeles Urban League

Sandra S. Carter

Vice President, Programs
Los Angeles Urban League

René Etienne

Vice President
Fund Development
Los Angeles Urban League

1994

Willie L. Williams

Chief of Police
City of Los Angeles

1995

Gladys Knight

Superstar, Humanitarian

1996

Ron W. Burkle

Chairman
The Yucaipa Companies

1997

Denzel Washington

Academy Award Winning Actor

1998

Yoshio Ishizaka

President & CEO
Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A., Inc.

1999

Natalie Cole

Superstar Entertainer, Humanitarian

2000

Bishop Charles E. Blake

West Angels Church of
God In Christ

2001

Steven Bochco

Television Producer

2002

Liam E. McGee

President
Bank of America California

2003

Suzanne De Passe

CEO
De Passe Entertainment

2004

Earvin "Magic" Johnson

Pioneering Entrepreneur
& Basketball Legend

2004

Laura Schulte

President, California & Nevada
Border Banking
Wells Fargo Corporation

2005

John W. Mack

President & CEO
Los Angeles Urban League

2006

James A. Bell

Chief Financial Officer
The Boeing Company

2007

Charles "Chuck" H. Smith

Former President & CEO
AT&T West

2008

Michael L. Garrett

Athletic Director
USC

2009

**Oscar Award Winning
Men**

2010

Paula Madison

Executive Vice President Diversity
NBC Universal & Company Officer
General Electric

2011

Kevin Johnson

Mayor, City of Sacramento

2011

Michelle A. Rhee

Founder & CEO
Students First

2012

Virgil Roberts, Esq.

Attorney

2013

Linda Johnson Rice

Chairman,
Johnson Publishing
Company, LLC

2014

Michael & Mattie Lawson

2015

Bernard & Shirley Kinsey

Philanthropist/Art Collector

2016

Deborah Flint

CEO
Los Angeles World Airports

2017

**Earvin "Magic" and
Cookie Johnson**

2018

Van Jones

Contributor & Social Entrepreneur
CNN

2019

Byron Allen

Owner & CEO
Entertainment Studios

2022

Rev. James Lawson

Civil Rights Leader

2023

Paula Madison

Chairman & CEO
Madison Media Management

2024

Noel Massie

VP Of US Operations
UPS (Ret.)

2025

George Fatheree, III

Acclaimed Cultural Transaction
Attorney and Social Impact
Entrepreneur



PAST HONOREES

DR. WINSTON C. DOBY COMMUNITY COALITION AWARD HONOREES

2006

**Asian Pacific American Legal
Center Mexican American Legal
Defense & Education Fund**

2007

Donald W. Tang
Vice Chairman
Bear Stearns

2008

Burson-Marsteller
Public Relations

2009

William J. Bratton
Chief of Police
LAPD

2010

Steven B. Sample
President
USC

2012

Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa
Mayor, City of Los Angeles

2013

AEG

2014

**Toyota Motor Sales,
U.S.A.**

2018

City Year and Dr. Theresa Price
Founder and CEO
National College
Resource Foundation

2019

Jeffery T.D. Wallace
President & CEO
Leaders Up

JOHN W. MACK LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD HONOREES

2011

Dr. Winston C. Doby
*University of California
& UC Los Angeles*

2012

Robert "Bob" Billingslea
Walt Disney Co. (Ret.)

2012

Luis Lainer, Esq.
Founder
Bet Tzedek

2012

Myrlie Evers-Williams
CEO
Medger Evers Institute
& Chairman of the Board
Emeritus, NAACP

2019

Fred Ali
President & CEO
Weingart Foundation

2024

Robert Simonds
Founder & Chairman
Stx Entertainment

Anne Biondi Simonds

Founder & CEO
Muse Systems Enterprises

2025

Norm Nixon
*Actor, TV Producer, Sports Agent, and
Entrepreneur, NBA Radio & TV Analyst*

CORPORATE PARTNER AWARD HONOREE

2023

Sekou Kaalund
Executive Vice President
U.S. Bank

2023

Martin Muoto
Founder & CEO
SoLA Impact

TRAILBLAZER AWARD HONOREE

2024

Sandra Jackson-Dumont
Director & CEO
Lucas Museum Of Narrative Art

2025

Nicole Harper Rawlins
*CEO of Nicker Management,
Top McDonald's Franchisee and
Entrepreneurial Pathfinder*

VISIONARY AWARD HONOREE

2024

Ron Frierson
*Director Of Economic
Development of The Western U.S.*
Amazon

2025

Jenifer Lewis
*Award-Winning Film, TV, Stage and
Voice Actress, "Mother of Black
Hollywood," Singer, Author, Mental
Health Advocate and Champion for
Social Justice*



Los Angeles
Urban League

EVENT EMCEE



Chris Schauble

News Anchor KTLA 5,
6x Emmy Winner, 6x Golden
Mike Award Winner

Chris Schauble is co-anchor of the KTLA 5 Morning News weekdays from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. He also co-hosts "Off The Clock" on the KTLA+ digital app. Since moving to Los Angeles in 2001, Chris has earned multiple awards, including six Emmys, six Golden Mikes and a Davey Award for Best Podcast Series.

Chris is passionate about his work, family and fitness. He is a former marathoner and triathlete, having completed three Ironman competitions, including the Ironman World Championship in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. Chris also coached youth track in the greater LA area for eight years as a USATF Level 1 Coach. During that time, he helped dozens of athletes become All-Americans.

Prior to his Los Angeles work, Chris spent time at KCNC-TV in Denver where he covered a number of national stories. His coverage of the Columbine High School shootings helped the station earn a regional Emmy for spot news. In 2000, Chris was named "Television Journalist of the Year" by the Colorado Association of Black Journalists.

Schauble holds a Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Journalism from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. He was honored by Fort Lewis College with the 2002 "Distinguished Alumni Award." In addition to his work as a journalist, Chris has been an instructor of Speech Communications and Media Research Analysis at Miles College in Birmingham, Ala., and was a guest Instructor at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, Fla. He is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists and Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

As an adoptee himself, Chris has dedicated much of his free time to helping needy children. In 2018, Chris was honored as the "Man of the Year" by United Friends of the Children for his work with foster youth nearing emancipation. He has also been recognized by the city of Los Angeles and the state of California multiple times for his ongoing community service.

Chris, his wife and their two sets of twin daughters live in the Los Angeles area.

ENTERTAINMENT



Chuck Dukas
Auctioneer

Originally from Dedham, Massachusetts, Chuck has called Los Angeles home for more than seventeen years. He began his career working in production and hyping up hopeful contestants on CBS' *The Price is Right* with Bob Barker. His infectious personality and energy have enabled Chuck to become one of the top network television audience warm-up hosts in the country.

Chuck has opened for such shows as *Dancing with the Stars*, *American Idol*, *The Masked Singer*, and *The Voice*. He's kept sitcom audiences entertained for shows like Netflix's *Fuller House*, Disney's *Just Roll with it* and several Nickelodeon projects and for more than eight years, Chuck has been the warmup host and spot announcer on NBC's *Americas Got Talent*.

Along with getting crowds hyped up, Chuck has made countless appearances on daytime television playing a Forrester employee on CBS' *The Bold and the Beautiful*, Stanley Bishop on *The Young and the Restless*, a hospital orderly on NBC's *Days of our Lives* and co-starred on Nickelodeon's *The Thundermans*. He served as host of a reality cooking show "Battle of the Chefs" on the Chef Life Network and has been an on-air correspondent for Lucasfilm for the two most recent Star Wars Celebrations.

Along with a very busy television schedule, Chuck can be found working with hundreds of nonprofits and organizations across the country as a benefit charity auctioneer, using energy and skill to bark out bids and raise millions of dollars yearly for organizations like Dunkin Donuts' Joy Foundation, Stand Up to Cancer, American Cancer Society, the Los Angeles Urban League and the countless philanthropic causes.



Los Angeles
Urban League

MUSICAL ENTERTAINER

Where Tradition Meets Innovation In Rhythm

Magatte Fall, is a three-time Grammy Award-winning composer and drummer hailing from the vibrant cultural landscape of Senegal, West Africa. Born into a musical family to parents Mareme Faye and Malik Sow, founders of a renowned West African Dance and Drum Company, Magatte's journey into the world of rhythm began at the tender age of 2.

His early years were steeped in the traditions of Djembe, Sabar, Kutiro, and Tama drumming, laying the foundation for a stellar career that would later grace the silver screen and renowned musical stages. Under the guidance of esteemed mentors such as his father Malik, Maissa Thioubou, Abodoul Doumbouya, Abdoulaye Diakhate, Kissima Diabate, Omar Mboup, Moussa Traore, the late Chiekh Tirou Mbaye, and Ndongo Mbaye, Magatte honed his skills with dedication and passion.

His career sprouted at a young age, marked by a notable role in the movie "Amistad," setting the stage for collaborations with musical luminaries such as Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind and Fire, Youssou N'Dour, Baba Maal, Salif Keita, John Legend, Jill Scott, Janelle Monae, Dianne Reeves, Pedrito Martinez and many more. His studio contributions as a percussionist embellished albums by renowned artists such as Angelique Kidjo, Rob Thomas, Pentatonix, Wally Seck, Keturah, and numerous others.

Over the years, Magatte has graced prestigious festivals and events including the Blues Festival, Womad Festival, Festival Modial des Art Negres, Newport Jazz Festival, Royal Albert Hall, Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, the opening of the African American Museum in Washington D.C., and the Nobel Peace Prize awards. For the past nine years, he has been the percussionist for the world-renowned Angelique Kidjo,

MAGATTE FALL AND MAX PERCUSSION



earning a Grammy for his contribution to her Best World Music Album, "Eve."

In 2018, Magatte achieved a milestone as a credited soloist alongside the Tama player Masamba Diop and world-renowned singer Baba Maal on Ludwig Goransson's film score for the Black Panther movie. Magatte has also composed music for major motion pictures such as *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, *Coming 2 America*, and *Babylon*. His passion for cultural education led him to collaborate with the Los Angeles Music Center,

teaching West African drumming at schools across Los Angeles.

He also shared his expertise at esteemed institutions like Grambling University, Santa Monica University, UCLA, Jackson State University, and Alabama State University, emphasizing the connection and fusion of Sabar and Djembe drums with band drumming and music. Rooted in his Senegalese heritage, Magatte remains connected to his roots through musical groups like Generation Percu, Kondiof, and his father's group, Fouta Toro.



MUSICAL ENTERTAINER



Dr. Dexter Story

Illustrious musician, composer, ethnomusicologist, and Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of California, Los Angeles

Dr. Dexter Story is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, music director, ethnomusicologist and multi-hyphenate producer from South Los Angeles, CA. He has worked in multiple facets of the music industry, has an M.A. in African Studies, a Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology and numerous album releases, production credits and appearances. Named after the legendary jazz saxophonist Dexter Gordon, at an early age Dexter Story was drawn to the sounds of global jazz, and its innovations.

Dexter's research focuses on music of the African diaspora, particularly habesha/Red Sea-adjacent music and culture. His dissertation is on Tigrinya guayla music of the small northeast African nation of Eritrea.

Dexter is also an artist-in-residence and production consultant with South Los Angeles' Community Coalition, a social justice non-profit founded by Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass. He is based in Los Angeles with his wife and has three older children.



Los Angeles
Urban League

MUSICAL ENTERTAINER



“MAKEDA”

Tiffany Makeda Francisco, better known to the world as “**Makeda**,” is a native of South New Jersey by way of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. A Rutgers University Performing Arts and Track & Field major, Makeda’s new life and renewed identity have transcended through her music, taking her artistry to a higher level.

Now the Founder and CEO of the women’s healing organization **Esther’s Chamber**, Makeda can be heard every Friday at 5:00 p.m. on KTYM.MEDIA, co-hosting *Gospel Jazz with Conversation*, bringing various topics for *Healing Our Women*. She also hosts her own talk show, *Relationships Rebirth*, on the first Wednesday of every month, tackling relationship issues through a faith-based perspective.

Makeda is the current Lead Vocalist of **The Original Mary Jane Girls** and former Lead Vocalist of the Grammy Award-winning band **Rose Royce**. No one has ever set the stage on fire quite like this lead vocalist for the amazing ‘70s funk band. She is a singer/songwriter, actress, author, speaker, talk show host, and international recording artist in her own right.

Performing at sold-out venues throughout Japan and various countries around the world, Makeda performed with **Teena Marie** for more than five and a half years as her featured opening act and background vocalist. Known as one of the most requested lead and background vocalists in the industry, Makeda has shared her vocal stylings on stage with **Ziggy Marley, Mavis Staples, Eric Benét, Kirk Whalum, Angelique Kidjo, Philip Bailey, Jeffrey Osborne, TQ, Gospel Gangstaz, Howard Hewett, Sheila E., and Ron Brown**, among countless others.

She can also be heard on projects by **Lenny Kravitz, Mavis Staples, Blue Magic, Malcolm-Jamal Warner, The Big Band (Norway), Jessie Powell, Mark Allen Felton, Girls SF, Christopher Owens, and 3rd Force**.

Some of her honors include the **LA Black Music Award (BMA) Best Gospel Female Performer of the Year (2004)**, the **Southern California Gospel Guild Contemporary Gospel Female Artist of the Year (2004)**, and the **LA Black Music Award (BMA) for Best New Artist (2002)**. She was also the first **Black Miss Greater Bridgeton, New Jersey (1988)** and **Miss Cumberland County (1989)**, among many other accomplishments.

@ MakedaLiveTribe
www.MakedaLive.com

SPEAKERS



**JUSTIN JOHNSON &
JESSICA BAIN**

The Serving Spoon, Co-Owners

For three generations, The Serving Spoon has been a family affair for EXECUTIVE MBA (EMBA) student Justin Johnson. Founded in 1983 by his grandfather Harold E. Sparks, the soul food eatery has served as a cornerstone of the Inglewood community, offering patrons authentic home recipes from Johnson's great-grandmother's cookbook for the past four decades.

Now, the Serving Spoon is gaining nationwide recognition. This June, it will receive the America's Classics Award from the James Beard Foundation — an honor bestowed to locally owned establishments that serve world-class food and play vital roles in their communities. Since the category's inception in 1998, just over 100 restaurants have received the honor. Now, The Serving Spoon joins the select and illustrious group.

"It's really cool to see that we were recognized by an organization like the James Beard Foundation because it holds a lot of weight and it means a lot for me and my family," Johnson said.

While Johnson claims The Serving Spoon's food is unbeatable, he knows they earned the America's Classics Award for more than their everything omelets or tuna croquettes; it's their personal touch. The Spoon's regular customers have been coming for years. In fact, Johnson says, if they don't show up, the family will call to make sure everything is okay.

Johnson himself has been an employee since high school, when his parents — who owned the restaurant at the time — put him to work on the weekends bussing tables and washing dishes. Although initially frustrated to spend his weekends at the family business, over time, the teenage Johnson came to see the restaurant as a second home and its customers, a second family.

"Our customers are our family," Johnson said. "There are people that have been coming since our granddad owned the restaurant and since our parents owned the restaurant ... We have employees that have worked for our granddad, siblings have worked for our granddad. I believe we are truly the epitome of a family business."

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic threatened the restaurant's existence. Unable to make payroll and facing closure, Johnson's mother made a desperate plea for GoFundMe donations. The community answered her call, raising over \$150,000 for the diner.

While Johnson appreciated the community's deep support for the restaurant, he could see the personal and professional toll the economic downturn had taken on his mother and father. Along with his older sister, Jessica Bain, the pair purchased The Serving Spoon in June 2022, freeing their parents to enjoy retirement.

"I believe we are truly the epitome of a family business."



Los Angeles
Urban League

SPEAKER



KATHY IRELAND

CEO, Kathy Ireland Worldwide

Kathy Ireland began her career as a supermodel and morphed into what the Associated Press and London Times call “a best friend to working mothers” as women all over America embrace her designs and products.

Kathy Ireland is Chief Designer and CEO of Kathy Ireland Worldwide (KIWW). The brand was acknowledged by Women’s Wear Daily as one of “America’s Most Popular” in its category, with women 18-49. The Kathy Ireland brand is also recognized as #1 in its category for “Product Innovation in America” by the country’s leading research firm, Kurt Salmon Associates.

“An amazing inspiration...She has become a heartland Martha Stewart... Perfect.”— Vanity Fair

Kathy Ireland was honored by the National Association of Women Business Owners and received the “Entertainment Businesswoman of the Year” Award. She is the only designer in history to have an LPGA-sponsored tournament named in her honor, The Kathy Ireland Championship. KIWW’s relationship with the LPGA supports women’s athletics and education.

To further reinforce Kathy Ireland’s prowess as a designer, her collections are regularly featured in the same prestigious magazines that ask her to grace their covers: Cosmopolitan, Glamour, McCall’s, People, Redbook, Shape and Fit Pregnancy. Kathy Ireland’s products are regularly featured beside those of Oscar de la Renta, Tommy Hilfiger, Cartier, Liz Claiborne, Charles Jourdan, and Gucci.

Kathy Ireland is a favorite guest on The Tonight Show, as well as MSNBC, The Today Show, Oprah, Entertainment Tonight, Access Hollywood and specials on E! and VH1.

It all started with socks. The genesis of Kathy Ireland Worldwide occurred in 1993 when founder and CEO Kathy Ireland brought her unique perspectives to American women with a collection of designer socks. Kathy was inspired to create her products after working with some of the world’s most famous designers. Kathy Ireland not only launched a successful clothing line, but also swimwear, maternity clothes, home furnishings and accessories divisions.

Kathy Ireland also supports numerous charities, including Elizabeth Taylor’s HIV/AIDS Foundation, Feed the Children, March of Dimes, Alliance for Christian Education and Barabara Ireland Walk for a Cure (founded by her mother).

Kathy Ireland co-authored the book, *Powerful Inspirations: Eight Lessons That Will Change Your Life*. She resides in Santa Barbara with her husband and three children.

SPEAKER

**FRANCHESCA RODRIGUEZ**

Entrepreneurship Center Outreach Program
Manager, Los Angeles Urban League

As the Entrepreneurship Center Outreach Program Manager at the Los Angeles Urban League, Franchesca supports community-centered initiatives that expand access to entrepreneurship resources and economic mobility programs throughout Los Angeles. Her work focuses on strengthening outreach efforts and connecting historically underserved communities with programs and services that foster long-term growth and stability.

With a background in community development and transportation policy, Franchesca brings a multidisciplinary approach to her work. She has led and supported initiatives focused on community planning, youth engagement, and transit equity. Prior to joining the Los Angeles Urban League, she worked with organizations including the University of California, Los Angeles Center for Community Engagement, the University of California, Berkeley Center for Cities and Schools, and the United States Department of Transportation, where she contributed to projects related to transportation access, civic engagement, and environmental justice.

Franchesca is also recognized for her leadership in community-based transit safety and youth advocacy initiatives. She directed the “Not One More Girl” public art and transit safety campaign in partnership with Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), to advance safer and more inclusive public transportation experiences. Her commitment to inclusive engagement and cross-sector collaboration continues to strengthen communities and create meaningful pathways to opportunity.



Los Angeles
Urban League

SPEAKER



MAYOR KAREN BASS

City of Los Angeles

Mayor Karen Bass has led the nation's second-largest city with unprecedented urgency that has delivered results for all Angelenos. Thousands more unhoused Angelenos came inside in her first year than the year before, leading to a reported drop in homelessness for the first time in several years.

During her first year, LAPD received record numbers of applicants while homicides and violent crime decreased. 100,000 more city services like pothole repair and graffiti removal have been provided. Thousands of businesses opened. Hundreds of millions of dollars secured through locking arms with state and federal partners as Los Angeles continues to urgently lead on climate.

And she's just getting started.

A daughter of our city, Mayor Bass was raised with her three brothers in the Venice/Fairfax neighborhood and is a proud graduate of Hamilton High School. After serving as a front-line healthcare provider as a nurse and as a Physician Assistant, Mayor Bass founded the Community Coalition to organize the predominantly Black and Latino residents of South L.A. against substance abuse, poverty and crime, and to pioneer strategies to address the root causes behind the challenges faced by underserved neighborhoods.

After being elected to represent Los Angeles in the State Assembly, Mayor Bass was elected Speaker, making her the first African American woman to ever lead a state legislative body in the history of the United States. There she and other legislative leaders were awarded the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for their work making tough decisions to keep the state from bankruptcy while protecting vital services during the largest economic decline since the Great Depression.

While representing Los Angeles and Culver City in Congress, Mayor Bass helped protect small businesses during the pandemic, created policy to drive local jobs from federal infrastructure funding, and led the passage of what the Los Angeles Times called "the most significant child welfare policy reform in decades."

Mayor Bass is the 43rd Mayor of Los Angeles and the first woman and second African American to be elected as the city's chief executive. She earned her bachelor's degree in health sciences from CSU Dominguez Hills before graduating from the USC Keck School of Medicine Physician Assistant Program and earning her master's degree in social work from USC.

Mayor Bass's oldest daughter Emilia planned to follow in her mother's footsteps working for social change. The Mayor continues to be inspired by Emilia and her son-in-law Michael's passion for life. She has three other children, Scythia, Omar and Yvette, and three grandchildren, Michael, Henry and Oliver who live in the Los Angeles area.

SPEAKER



COUNCILMAN MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON

District 8, Los Angeles

As President of the Los Angeles City Council, Marqueece Harris-Dawson has dedicated over two decades to community activism and public service. Born and raised in South Los Angeles, Harris-Dawson's early experiences witnessing the impact of the crack cocaine epidemic on his community shaped his commitment to social justice. He graduated from Morehouse College and holds a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Stanford's Graduate School of Business.

Since his election to the City Council in 2015, Harris-Dawson has been a force for change. His co-authorship of Proposition HHH, a \$1.2 billion bond measure for permanent supportive housing, has led to a significant increase in affordable housing in the Eighth District, surpassing any other part of the city. His advocacy for the Community Safety Partnership has built reparative relationships between the community and the LAPD, making the district safer and more secure.

Even in the face of the 2020 pandemic, Harris-Dawson's leadership shone through. He initiated a program to support local businesses and feed vulnerable seniors, which was not only a lifeline for the community but also became a statewide model. His transformation of a controversial Metro train project into a public art people's museum celebrating Black culture in Los Angeles is a testament to his innovative and adaptive approach to governance. Known for his pragmatic and progressive approach, Harris-Dawson's efforts in affordable housing, economic equity, and public safety have significantly impacted Los Angeles.

He currently chairs the following committees; Rules, Elections, & Intergovernmental Relations, Board of Referred Powers, and the Ad Hoc Committee on the 2028 Olympics and Paralympic Games. A proud son of South Central LA, he continues to drive initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all residents.



Los Angeles
Urban League

SPEAKER



COUNCILWOMAN HEATHER HUTT

District 10, Los Angeles

Heather Hutt serves as the Councilwoman for the Tenth District. A daughter of Los Angeles, Hutt was born and raised in Leimert Park. She is the first woman in history and the first Black woman to be elected as a voting member for Council District 10. She is the only Black woman currently sitting on the Los Angeles City Council.

For more than 30 years, Hutt has dedicated her life to activism, public service, and her community. Prior to her role as Councilwoman, she served as the first Black U.S. Senate State Director in California's history, serving then-Senator Kamala D. Harris. As State Director, Hutt was the principal representative amongst constituents and elected officials throughout California. In this role, she advocated for women, bringing together healthcare professionals to discuss implicit bias in health care, particularly for women of color. Hutt fought for DACA recipients enduring the Trump Administration's assault on immigrants, assisted in coordinating the statewide response to the pandemic, and ensured access to federal resources for all Californians. Prior to being elected as Councilwoman in 2024, Hutt was also the first Black woman to serve as a Los Angeles City Council District 10 Chief of Staff since 1973.

A champion for all Angelenos, Hutt has consistently prioritized the needs of the most vulnerable communities. From fighting for affordable housing and tenant protections with the District to leading the charge against cashless businesses throughout the City, her dedication to equity is unwavering. Her work securing permanent supportive housing for over 3,500 formerly unhoused individuals and providing vital food assistance to hundreds of constituents is a testament to her commitment. Hutt has also been a staunch advocate for seniors, securing funding for essential programs like senior meals and essential resources that ensure their well-being. As Chair of the City's Transportation committee, Hutt also led the charge for a 5-year Capital Infrastructure Plan for all public right-of-way projects.

Hutt has worked with her colleagues to advance legislation that establishes, enhances, and enacts protections for the City's most marginalized communities, while also working to prioritize environmental equity through the expansion of our tree canopy, the creation of new park space, and the continued enrichment of the District's existing green space.

As a member of the Los Angeles City Council, Hutt's priority will always be to serve. The Office of Council District 10 is committed to providing resources and housing to our unhoused neighbors, building parks that are safe and accessible to everyone, and enhancing the overall quality and beautification of our City streets. We want to make our constituents proud to call this district their home - because this District is our home too.

SPEAKER



HOLLY J. MITCHELL

Supervisor, Los Angeles County, 2nd District

Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell currently serves on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. As the daughter of parents who were public servants and a third-generation Angeleno, Mitchell leads with a deep understanding of the vital safety net LA County provides to millions of families and is committed to ensuring that all residents can thrive.

Since being elected to the Board of Supervisors on November 3rd, 2020, Supervisor Mitchell has made poverty alleviation a countywide priority and has anchored an equitable recovery plan from the health and economic pandemic caused by COVID-19. Within her first year as Supervisor and with support from the County Board of Supervisors, Mitchell passed a landmark guaranteed income program, made LA County the first in the nation to phase out urban oil drilling and has strengthened the County's ability to quickly respond to mental health crises among our unhoused residents.

Supervisor Mitchell is honored to represent the two million residents of Los Angeles County's Second District - including the neighborhood she grew up in - Leimert Park, along with the cities of Carson, Compton, Culver City, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Los Angeles (portions), Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, and a dozen unincorporated communities.



Los Angeles
Urban League

SPEAKER



BERNARD AND SHIRLEY KINSEY

The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection

When Bernard and Shirley Kinsey were married in 1967, the couple set a goal of visiting 100 different countries during their life together. While traveling and exploring other countries and cultures, Bernard and Shirley began collecting art and artifacts as treasured memories of their travel experiences. As their collection grew, they soon realized that there were so many aspects about their own cultural heritage that they did not know or collect. Their passion for world culture led them to want to understand and develop a deeper connection with their own African American history and culture.

Through countless travels and life-changing experiences, the Kinsey's journeys brought them back home, leading them to study, and then collect objects that share their own heritage, arts, and culture. Today, The Kinsey African American Art & History Collection travels the globe as an award-winning museum exhibition – lead by the stewardship of Bernard, Shirley, and Khalil Kinsey. The exhibition celebrates the achievements and contributions of Black Americans from before the formation of the United States to present times.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

TITLE



VISIONARY



CHAIRMAN





Los Angeles
Urban League

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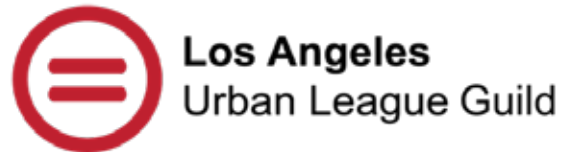
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Shape the FUTURE

The Future of Work Is NOW.
Get Paid to Train for Careers in
Tech, AI, and Green Construction.



**BRIDGESLA is our community's opportunity
to Build Careers that Pays Well – and Last.**

**We provide free, hands-on training with industry-recognized
certifications that open doors to union jobs, tech careers and the
growing green economy.**

BRIDGESLA: CAREERS OF THE FUTURE START HERE

Powered by the Los Angeles Urban League and partners, BRIDGES LA equips people from historically underrepresented communities with skills, support, and confidence to step into the future of work.

Green Building & Wildfire Resilience

Climate-resilient construction,
solar, sustainable retrofit work,
and union apprenticeship-ready
credentials.

Applied Ethical AI & Clean Tech

AI fluency, data literacy,
responsible technology,
clean-tech operations, and
tech-enabled roles.

Data & eDiscovery

Digital evidence, eDiscovery
workflows, technology-enabled
litigation support, and
data-centered career skills.

More than a program. A movement toward visibility, voice, and economic power.



Los Angeles Urban League

Building equitable pathways to the careers of tomorrow

BRIDGESLA

Tech. Applied AI. Green Construction.



WHITNEY M. YOUNG JR. AWARDS CELEBRATION

HONORING THE LEGACY, ADVANCING THE FUTURE

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Noel Massie



With heartfelt gratitude

We thank each of you for your dedication, hard work, and shared vision of a more just and equitable world. Your teamwork and unwavering commitment make our mission possible and our impact lasting.

THE LOS ANGELES URBAN LEAGUE STAFF

Cynthia Mitchell-Heard

President & Chief Executive Officer

Wendell Younkins

Chief Financial Officer

Holly Harris Monk

Chief of Staff

Laureen O'Hara Abeyta

Vice President of Business Development

Deidrea Sherman

Vice President of Finance

Robert Zardeneta

Vice President of Programs

Darrell Hills

Director of Programs, Education & Workforce Development

April Bundy

Director of Entrepreneurship

Miguel Guzman

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Franchesca Rodriguez

Access for All Outreach Manager

Verdell Shumpert

Workforce Inclusion Program Manager

David Garcia

Fund Accountant & Fiscal Liaison

Sebastian Alvarez

Programs Coordinator

Justin Monk

Programs Assistant

Michael J. Stratton

Board Liaison & Public Policy, Governmental Affairs

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CharMel

Ron Carter

The Carter Agency

Carmen & Matthew Himes

Himes Group

Michelle Mace

Norwest Design Services

Rona Menashe

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Joy Ruiz

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Veronica Hendrix

Irma Hopkins

Yolanda Horn

Carrie Irving

Daphne Jackson

Cathy Lewis

Arnette Mack

Eulanda Matthews

Jacqueline Nunn

Emily Owens

Nicole Rawlings

Rita Riddick

Tangela Ridgeway

Lavada Theus

Earnest Williams



WORKFORCE

Workforce Development For All

We help people access living-wage employment with good benefits through career pathways, job readiness, and employer connections. Through recruiting and career fairs, resume and interview support, we connect job seekers to opportunity and employers to prepared talent.



Construction Career Academy

The Los Angeles Urban League works in partnership with So Cal Gas, the Southern California Building Trades Association, and other construction trade and utility unions to increase minority access to apprenticeship programs.



Healthcare Workforce

In partnership with UCLA Health, our Medical Assistant Certification program offers trainees the opportunity to become certified Medical Assistants in 12 months and guarantees job placement at one of UCLA's nine hospitals and clinical sites.



Backstage Careers

Backstage provides training and job opportunities for individuals who are interested in working in "Below the Line" jobs: technical crew roles in production for film, tv, and live events.



ERiCA

The Los Angeles Urban League expands access to workplace safety, career readiness, and industry-informed training that helps workers understand their rights, navigate jobsite expectations, and pursue safer, more sustainable career pathways in high-demand fields.



Bridges LA

Preparing individuals for careers of the future, NOW, in Applied AI, Sustainable Construction, Data & eDiscovery and Technology. BRIDGES LA builds long-lasting careers that pay well, with 12 weeks of paid training included. Hands on training to earn certifications then union jobs.





ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Entrepreneurship Center

Our Urban Center for Entrepreneurship provides corporation owners with best-in-class business intelligence, one-on-one success strategies and a network of advisors to complement your existing company's management team.



INTUIT IDEAS

Invest, Develop, Empower, Accelerate, Scale. IDEAS will support Black and Latino-owned small businesses representing a geographically diverse cross-section of Los Angeles.



Momentum Capital Roadmap Series

In collaboration with the award-winning financial team of Momentum Capital, this series provides training for the entrepreneur to develop, promote and secure funding for their businesses. Momentum also provides networking opportunities to enhance one's business acumen.



City National Bank Homeownership Pathways

Educational community workshops sponsored by City National Bank to provide potential homeowners with tools, guidance and financial strategies--that will give them practical insights for unlocking financial stability and achieving the goal of owning a home.



Business Counseling

Our Business Counselors provide Small Business Counseling. We work with entrepreneurs and emerging business enterprises to help them to scale and achieve success in their market.



Urban Capital Readiness Program

In conjunction with the Minority Business Development Agency, this twice-a-year cohort provides entrepreneurs and businesses with training, networking, and access to capital to assist them in starting and growing their business.





EDUCATION

Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders

The Los Angeles Urban League understands that education is one of the most important investments a person can make. This is why we are dedicated to empowering tomorrow's leaders.



Project Ready

Academic enrichment support, socio-emotional education, and college and career readiness for LA County youth.



Biz Camp

Four-week entrepreneurship summer camp where students learn how to turn their business ideas into reality through planning, analysis, and real-world application.



Biz Institute

A yearlong "advanced class" of Biz Camp. Students engage in a curriculum that teaches traditional business startup skills and provides support for regional entrepreneurship competitions.



State of Students Report

An insightful student-curated report that ventures far beyond simply raw data. It's a reflection of the voices and lived experiences of students across Los Angeles County. A breakthrough research project capturing what young learners are asking for in communities and classrooms.



Black High School Graduation

Over 50 schools participate throughout LA County as we honor all exceptional graduates with scholarships and student spotlights; celebrity guests, notable cultural, political, and academic leaders also recognize and celebrate their achievements.





ADVOCACY

Empowering Civic Engagement and Social Justice

The Los Angeles Urban League has been a powerful catalyst for change, amplifying Black and underserved voices and paving the way for economic stability, equality and access to transportation.



The State of Black LA

- A panel series that examines the racial and economic inequalities experienced by the Black and Latino, and all underserved communities in Los Angeles.
- This forum will continue to assess the current state and progress of access of equality with a focus on Health Equity, Economic Empowerment, Housing and Mobility.
- This series is hosted on the campus of USC and is streamed live in partnership with NBC4/ Telemundo52

Reclaim Your Vote & Power

- Protecting and advancing voting rights for all eligible voters.
- Increasing voter turnout and empowering communities to make their voices heard and drive change locally and nationally.
- Mobilizing voters on Election Day and cultivating future leaders committed to equity, justice, and empowerment.





**Los Angeles
Urban League**

*Empowering communities.
Changing lives.*



Raising the Trades **SUPPORTING WOMEN IN THE TRADES**

Mentorship That Matters

Connect with experienced tradeswomen who understand your journey

Mental Health & Wellness Support

Confidential resources to help you navigate stress on and off the jobsite

Stronger Worksite Culture

Helping create safer, more respectful environments for everyone

WHY IT MATTERS

Too many women leave the trades, not because they lack skill, but because they lack support.

We're working to change that by building a culture where women can stay, grow, and lead.

WHO IT'S FOR

- Women in construction trades
- Apprentices & pre-apprentices
- Journey-level tradeswomen
- Those exploring a career in the trades

laul.org/trades



State of California
Department of
Industrial Relations

***BECAUSE SUCCESS IN THE
TRADES SHOULDN'T MEAN
GOING IT ALONE.***





The beauty of community in action

What's more beautiful than a community working to make a difference? Not much, but coming together to celebrate in style is a close second. When we work together, better things are possible.

U.S. Bank is proud to support the Los Angeles Urban League's Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards Celebration - Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future.



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United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
BUDGET
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
JUDICIARY
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

June 24, 2026

Cynthia Mitchell-Heard
President & CEO
Los Angeles Urban League
4401 Crenshaw Boulevard #201
Los Angeles, CA 90043

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to extend heartfelt congratulations to the Los Angeles Urban League on the occasion of the 51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards and Celebration.

Beginning in 1921, the Los Angeles Urban League has played a leading role in empowering underserved communities throughout Los Angeles to fully participate in American life by helping to change the social and economic conditions of their environment. I commend you for your efforts to educate, uplift, and lead communities of color to secure economic self-reliance and civil rights.

The 51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards and Celebration marks an important milestone in honoring visionary leaders who promote equality and justice. This year's theme, Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future, reflects the urgent need to come together after unprecedented times and continue to champion civil rights for us all.

Congratulations once again to the Los Angeles Urban League and all of the honorees. May this evening inspire you to continue building an empowered future.

Sincerely,



Alex Padilla
United States Senator

ADAM B. SCHIFF
UNITED STATES SENATOR
CALIFORNIA

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OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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AND FORESTRY

SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

June 24, 2026

Los Angeles Urban League
4401 Crenshaw Blvd., Suite 201
Los Angeles, CA 90043

Dear Friends:

Please accept my congratulations as you gather to celebrate the Los Angeles Urban League's 105th year and its Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr Awards Celebration. Serving as an advocate for African Americans and underserved communities for over a century, the Los Angeles Urban League has been a champion for civil rights, community empowerment, and social equality.

Beginning in New York City and branching out to its local unit in Los Angeles, the organization has put forth lasting solutions for generations. This year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future" embodies the commitment of transformative impact across the region.

I would like to acknowledge tonight's honorees: Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Lifetime Achievement Award, Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award, Michael Weinstein, John W. Mack Legacy Award, Jo-An Turman, Visionary Award, and Glynn Turman, Trailblazer Award.

Congratulations again to the Los Angeles Urban League on its 105th anniversary and Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr Awards Celebration. The Los Angeles Urban League's work continues in leading a visionary future for generations to come.

Sincerely,



ADAM B. SCHIFF
U.S. Senator



24th of June 2026

Dear Friends,

As the Congresswoman representing California's 37th Congressional District, it is my distinct honor to congratulate the Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL) on your 51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards.

For more than a century, LAUL has been a driving force in advancing opportunity, equity, and economic empowerment for communities of color. Through your work in education, workforce development, and housing, you have opened doors for generations of Angelenos and strengthened our city in countless ways. I am grateful for your continued leadership and partnership in the fight for a more just and inclusive future.

This year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," reflects the enduring impact of those who have paved the way and the shared responsibility we hold to build upon their progress. I am proud to recognize this year's distinguished honorees: Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Michael Weinstein, Jo-An Turman, and Glynn Turman. Your leadership, service, and commitment to community embody the values that Whitney M. Young Jr. championed throughout his life.

Thank you to everyone who made this special event possible. I wish you all a wonderful afternoon of celebration and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sydney Kamlager-Dove', with a stylized, flowing script.

Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress





June 24, 2026

Congratulations to the



**Los Angeles
Urban League**

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Los Angeles Urban League on the occasion of your 51st Annual Whitney M. Young Awards Celebration as you commemorate the 105th anniversary of your founding. I am especially proud of your activism, advocacy and growth over the past century, and of the fact that the LA Urban League continues to thrive and make a lasting impact throughout our city.

Tonight, I join you in recognizing five of my friends who are this year's distinguished honorees: **Jo-An Turman**, Vice President of Habitat for Humanity Los Angeles, who is receiving the Visionary Award, and her husband, **Glynn Turman**, the award-winning actor, director and youth empowerment advocate, who is receiving the Trailblazer Award; **Janice Bryant-Howroyd**, Founder and CEO of ActOne Group, who is receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award; **Michael Weinstein**, Founder and President of AIDS Healthcare Foundation, who is receiving the John W. Mack Legacy Award; and **Bridgid Coulter Cheadle**, Founder of Blackbird Collective, who is receiving the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award. Together, we celebrate their remarkable achievements and outstanding contributions to our community.

I extend my best wishes to everyone in attendance for a memorable and meaningful evening. I am grateful to stand with you in the ongoing fight for justice, economic and educational empowerment and equal rights.

Sincerely yours,

Maxine Waters

Member of Congress • 43rd District, California





OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

June 24, 2026

Los Angeles Urban League 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Gala

On behalf of the state of California, I am pleased to commemorate the Los Angeles Urban League's 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Gala.

For more than a century, the Los Angeles Urban League has been a steadfast force for economic empowerment, educational opportunities, workforce development, and social justice throughout Los Angeles. Through youth education, workforce development, and entrepreneurship programs, the League has helped countless individuals and families overcome barriers, achieve independence, and build brighter futures. Tonight, I would like to applaud the League's unwavering commitment to advancing equity and opportunities and recognize the influence it has had on the landscape of Los Angeles and California as a whole.

On this occasion, I am wishing everyone in attendance a night defined by empowerment, celebration, and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", is written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California



ELENI KOUNALAKIS
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

June 24, 2026

Los Angeles Urban League
4401 Crenshaw Boulevard, Suite 201
Los Angeles, CA 90043

Dear Attendees and Honorees:

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards!

For 105 years, the Los Angeles Urban League has been a leader in empowering underserved communities. Your transformative programs have uplifted and helped individuals improve their lives through education, job training, workforce development, and much more. Thank you, President and CEO Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, and the incredible team at the Los Angeles Urban League, for your tireless hard work on behalf of the community.

Tonight's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," is an appropriate testament to the enduring work of the League. Over the decades the Los Angeles Urban League has created and supported communities of leaders who continue to strengthen the fabric of Los Angeles and our state.

Finally, I offer my sincere congratulations to tonight's honorees – Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Michael Weinstein, Jo-An Turman, Glynn Turman, and Chris Schauble. Your distinguished careers and tremendous achievements are inspirational and have pushed the greater Los Angeles community towards a better, more just, and equitable future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "Eleni".

Ambassador Eleni Kounalakis (RET.)
Lieutenant Governor



Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D. California Secretary of State

June 24, 2026

Greetings Friends:

It is my honor to recognize and congratulate the Los Angeles Urban League on its 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Celebration. As the organization marks 105 years of service, this year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," reflects both its history and its continued commitment to expanding opportunity.



For more than a century, the Los Angeles Urban League has expanded access to education, workforce development, and economic opportunity. Through its programs, services, and advocacy, the organization has helped individuals and families overcome challenges, pursue new opportunities, and build brighter futures throughout Los Angeles and California.

On behalf of the State of California, I extend my sincere congratulations to this year's honorees: Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Michael Weinstein, Jo-An Turman, and Glynn Turman. Their accomplishments and service have made a lasting contribution to their professions, organizations, and communities reflecting the purpose and spirit of this celebration.

As California's Secretary of State, I am honored to join in celebrating the Los Angeles Urban League and this year's honorees. This event recognizes individuals and organizations whose work has opened doors for others and contributed to communities across California. I wish the Los Angeles Urban League continued success in serving the people of Los Angeles and creating opportunities for future generations.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shirley N. Weber'.

Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D.
California Secretary of State



LOLA SMALLWOOD-CUEVAS

CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR • 28TH DISTRICT



June 24, 2026

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to commend the Los Angeles Urban League for hosting its annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards Celebration.

This important event honors the legacy of Whitney M. Young Jr. and recognizes leaders whose vision, courage and service strengthen our communities. Through this celebration, the Los Angeles Urban League continues its longstanding mission of promoting equity, empowerment and community progress while acknowledging those whose contributions help move our communities forward.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate this year's award recipients who drive meaningful change in our communities:

- ✦ Bridgid Coulter Cheadle – Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award
- ✦ Janice Byrant-Howroyd – Lifetime Achievement Award
- ✦ Glynn Turman – Trailblazer Award
- ✦ Jo-An Turman – Visionary Award
- ✦ Michael Weinstein – John W. Mack Legacy Award

I extend my sincere appreciation for your ongoing dedication to uplifting our communities. All the best on a memorable celebration!

Warm Regards,

Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Senator, 28th District
California State Senate

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California State Senate

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE ARTS, CHAIR
ENVIRONMENTAL CAUCUS, CO-CHAIR

June 24th, 2026

Dear Friends,

It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you to the Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards Celebration to honor tonight's awardees.

Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, the winner of this year's Whitney M. Young Jr. Award, is the Founder of Blackbird Collective and one of the foremost philanthropic and entrepreneurial minds inspiring social impact.



Janice Byant-Howroyd is the Founder and CEO of ActOne Group. She is the first Black woman to build a billion-dollar company in the US, and her career reflects decades of leadership expertise, earning her the Los Angeles Urban League Lifetime Achievement Award.

The John W. Mack Legacy Award is proudly presented to Michael Weinstein. Founder and President of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, my friend Michael has been a fearless advocate for housing and public health for many decades and is currently leading one of the largest AIDS organizations in the world.

Jo-An Turman is the Head of Global Entertainment Partnerships with Habitat for Humanity International. She receives the Los Angeles Urban League Visionary Award for her advocacy for inner-city youth and philanthropy.

Glynn Turman is an Emmy and multiple-time Image Award winning actor, director, cowboy and youth empowerment advocate, receiving this year's Trailblazer Award.

I am honored to add my congratulations for the well-deserved recognitions of tonight's honorees. Please accept my warm wishes for a successful and memorable event!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Ben Allen in black ink.

BEN ALLEN
Senator, 24th District

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0055
(916) 319-2055
FAX (916) 319-2155

DISTRICT OFFICE
5757 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, SUITE 345
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(310) 641-5410
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Assemblymember.Bryan@assembly.ca.gov
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PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE
CHANGE POLICIES

June 24, 2026

RE: Commemorating 105 Years of the Los Angeles Urban League

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL)'s 51st annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards commemorating the LAUL's 105th anniversary. We're proud to celebrate our honorees: Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Brigid Coulter Cheadle, Michael Weinstein, Jo-An Turnman, and Glynn Turman for their inspiring service to the wellbeing of our Assembly District 55 neighbors and our broader Los Angeles communities.

Officially established in 1921, the LAUL is dedicated to improving social and economic conditions for African Americans and underserved communities. As an organization, they are champions of civil rights, anti-discrimination laws, health, welfare, equal opportunity, living wages, and education. They are respected collaborators and partners in commerce, industry, and government. Through these efforts and a host of public programs, the LAUL has assisted generations of Californians in achieving economic independence and stability.

This year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future" speaks to our living history – both what we have achieved and will achieve, recognizing the obstacles we have and will continue to surpass. For 105 years, LAUL has navigated it all, and our honorees are proven partners, providing a sense of place which sees us through our best and most challenging moments.

On behalf of the 55th Assembly District, I extend my congratulations to the Urban League and our honorees for uplifting us all each day. May they continue to serve as a beacon of hope, equity, and progress for years to come.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Isaac G. Bryan'.

Isaac G. Bryan
Assemblymember, 55th District



STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0042
(916) 319-2042
FAX (916) 319-2142

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ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

June 3rd, 2026

Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL)

51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards Celebration

Dear Attendees,

Congratulations on celebrating the 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Gala and your deserving slate of honorees who have led lives of service to others and reflect the legacy of the iconic civil rights leader. Their contributions to the City and County of Los Angeles are immeasurable and have bettered our neighborhoods.

I extend a special thank you to the Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL) who truly adhere to this year's theme of "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future" through generations of selfless leadership. Your support of living-wage careers, entrepreneurship, and combatting inequities in our communities ensure that more doors are opened for those who follow.

I appreciate your advocacy and alacrity to meeting every moment that calls you. I wish you a successful event and look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Jacqui Irwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

JACQUI IRWIN

Assemblymember, 42nd District



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HOLLY J. MITCHELL

SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT



June 24, 2026

Dear Friends and Honored Guests,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Los Angeles Urban League's (LAUL) 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards and to celebrate this year's inspiring honorees - Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Jo-An Turman, Glynn Turman and Michael Weinstein - for their leadership and unwavering commitment to creating new possibilities for our communities. The theme for this year's awards, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," reflects our shared responsibility to carry forward the values of Whitney M. Young, Jr. while investing in solutions that create lasting impact for generations to come.

For over a century, the LAUL has been a steadfast advocate and catalyst for civil rights, working tirelessly to promote diversity, combat poverty, and advance economic self-reliance so our communities can truly thrive. Since the launch of the *State of Black Los Angeles County* report, led by Los Angeles County's Anti-Racism Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, my office has proudly partnered with LAUL to elevate the report's findings and advance meaningful dialogues around the challenges and opportunities facing Black and Brown communities. The report was commissioned as part of the County's efforts to address structural racism and improve outcomes for residents across key areas, including health, housing, economic opportunity, and more.

It is an honor to work alongside the Los Angeles Urban League in service to our shared constituency. On behalf of the two million residents of the Second Supervisorial District, whom I am proud to represent, I wish you continued success and a wonderful celebration.

Sincerely,

Holly J. Mitchell
Supervisor, Second District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

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Los Angeles, CA 90007

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Lennox, CA 90304

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LINDSEY P. HORVATH

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
THIRD DISTRICT

June 24, 2026

Los Angeles Urban League
4401 Crenshaw Blvd, Suite 201
Los Angeles, CA 90043

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to welcome you to the 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Celebration.

This year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," reflects the enduring impact of Whitney M. Young, Jr.'s leadership and the ongoing work to create opportunity for all. Tonight, we celebrate leaders whose vision, service, and commitment are helping strengthen communities and advance equity across Los Angeles.

For more than a century, the Los Angeles Urban League has been a champion for economic empowerment and educational opportunity. Through the steadfast commitment to uplifting underserved communities, the Urban League continues to transform lives throughout California.

Tonight's guests and honorees embody that same spirit of leadership and service. Their contributions remind us that lasting change is possible when we invest in families, work together, and remain committed to a more just future.

Thank you for joining this special celebration. Together, let's honor a remarkable legacy and continue to create opportunities for generations to come.

My sincerest thanks and congratulations.

Lindsey P. Horvath
Supervisor, Third District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

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DISTRICT OFFICE**

6464 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 710
Los Angeles, CA 90025



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

June 24, 2026

Dear Friends,

I extend my warmest congratulations to the **Los Angeles Urban League** on hosting its **51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Dinner**. This year's celebration honors individuals whose leadership, service, and professional accomplishments have created meaningful opportunities and lasting impact throughout Los Angeles and beyond.

Since its founding in 1921, they have worked to advance economic empowerment, educational opportunity, workforce development, and social justice for Black and underserved communities through advocacy, community engagement, and direct service.

I am proud to recognize this year's distinguished honorees, whose achievements reflect the values of leadership, innovation, and service championed by the Los Angeles Urban League:

- ❖ **Janice Bryant Howroyd** – *Lifetime Achievement Award*
- ❖ **Bridgid Coulter Cheadle** – *Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award*
- ❖ **Michael Weinstein** – *John W. Mack Legacy Award*
- ❖ **Jo-Ann Turman** – *Visionary Award*
- ❖ **Glynn Turman** – *Trailblazer Award*

Their contributions across business, philanthropy, healthcare, housing, youth advocacy, and community development have helped create a stronger and more equitable future for our communities.

I commend these contributions and send my best wishes for a memorable and successful evening!

Sincerely,

Karen Bass

CONGRATULATIONS!

**MARQUEECE
HARRIS-DAWSON**
LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

The City of Los Angeles and Council District Eight proudly join in recognizing the Los Angeles Urban League for its 2026 Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Dinner. Since its inception, the Urban League has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to championing equality, fostering economic growth, and strengthening the social fabric of its community.

The theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," perfectly reflects our shared dedication to the values of Whitney M. Young Jr. and spotlights our investment in future generations. We extend our sincere appreciation to this year's distinguished awardees: social impact entrepreneur Bridgid Coulter Cheadle; AHF Founder and activist Michael Weinstein; philanthropist and youth advocate Jo-An Turman; Emmy Award-winning actor Glynn Turman; and tonight's emcee, KTLA 5 News Anchor Chris Schauble. Their dedication and commitment to excellence are truly commendable.

We extend special recognition to Janice Bryant Howroyd, Founder & CEO of ActOne Group, on receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award. Your incredible journey as the first Black woman to build a billion-dollar company in the U.S., which is now the largest privately held, minority-woman-owned personnel company, is such a bright light and an inspiration to every single one of us here in Los Angeles.

Lastly, thank you to President and CEO Cynthia Mitchell-Heard and the Los Angeles Urban League team for your tireless spirit and dedication. Your work makes our city a better place every day, helping us build a safer, kinder, and more connected Los Angeles. Congratulations to all the award winners. We are eager to witness the remarkable achievements you will undoubtedly accomplish in the future!

With unity and hope,



Marqueece Harris-Dawson





Dear Friends,

It is with great pride that I offer my heartfelt support and congratulations to the Los Angeles Urban League for this year's Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards! This incredible milestone reflects your organization's longstanding commitment towards creating a more equitable LA for all Angelenos.

For the last 51 years, the Los Angeles Urban League has given a voice to the voiceless. Through their educational, job, and housing programming, this organization has empowered communities across our city to become economically resilient, relying on themselves and their neighbors to create a better quality of life for our people.

The 51st Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards honor individuals who've significantly contributed to Los Angeles, aligning with this year's theme: "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future". I want to specifically recognize the incredible contributions of tonight's honorees.

- Lifetime Achievement Award: Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Founder and CEO of ActOne Group
- Whitney M. Young Jr. Award: Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Founder of Blackbird Collective
- John W. Mack Legacy Award: Michael Weinstein, Founder and President of AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF)
- Visionary Award: Jo-An Turman, Vice President of Habitat for Humanity Los Angeles
- Trailblazer Award: Glynn Turman, Primetime Emmy Award-winning actor, director, and youth empowerment advocate

In their own significant way, these leaders collectively embody the spirit of this evening's theme, contributing to the fabric of Los Angeles. They exemplify what it means to restore dignity, working to right historical wrongs and uplift those who have been marginalized. They also rebuild opportunity, and create pathways for growth and success where none existed before, ensuring a more equitable future for all Angelenos.

Congratulations, again, to both the Honorees and The Los Angeles Urban League for your unwavering commitment and tireless efforts in serving our communities. Your dedication is a beacon of hope and progress, inspiring others to act.

Sincerely,

HEATHER HUTT
Councilwoman, Tenth District
City of Los Angeles





Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City of Los Angeles and Council District 9, it is a pleasure to congratulate the Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL) as it celebrates the 51st Annual Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards and an extraordinary milestone—105 years of service to the Los Angeles community.

For more than a century, the Los Angeles Urban League has opened doors, created opportunities, and helped individuals and families build better lives. Its work has touched every corner of our city through programs that support education, employment, housing and economic mobility.

This evening, we recognize a remarkable group of honorees whose work has left a lasting mark on Los Angeles and beyond. Congratulations to Janice Bryant-Howroyd, Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Michael Weinstein, Jo-An Turman, and Glynn Turman. Each has devoted time, talent, and leadership to improving the lives of others and strengthening the communities they serve.

As we celebrate these distinguished honorees and the enduring legacy of LAUL, we are reminded that lasting change is built through dedication and a willingness to invest in others.

Congratulations on this historic milestone, and best wishes for an evening worthy of the occasion.

In solidarity,

Councilmember Curren Price
Los Angeles City Council, District 9



TRACI PARK

LOS ANGELES COUNCILWOMAN ★ 11TH DISTRICT

June 2026

Dear Friends,

It is my distinct honor to extend warm greetings and heartfelt congratulations to the Los Angeles Urban League on the occasion of your 51st Annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Celebration. Gathering once again at the Skirball Cultural Center here in Council District 11, this remarkable event reflects the League's enduring commitment to expanding opportunity, advancing equity, and strengthening communities across Los Angeles.

This year's theme, "Honoring the Legacy, Advancing the Future," is both timely and inspiring. As our city continues to confront complex challenges while building toward a stronger future, the Los Angeles Urban League remains a powerful force for progress, empowering individuals, uplifting families, and creating pathways to success for generations to come.

I also extend my sincerest congratulations to this year's distinguished honorees:

Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, recipient of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award, whose visionary leadership, entrepreneurial spirit, and commitment to advancing economic opportunity continue to create meaningful impact throughout our communities;

Michael Weinstein, recipient of the John W. Mack Legacy Award, whose dedication to civic engagement, philanthropy, and public service has strengthened countless organizations and improved lives across Los Angeles;

Jo-An Turman, recipient of the Visionary Award, whose creative excellence and commitment to storytelling have helped illuminate important voices, experiences, and perspectives;

Glynn Turman, recipient of the Trailblazer Award, whose extraordinary career and cultural contributions have inspired generations while leaving an indelible mark on the arts and entertainment industry;

And Janice Bryant Howroyd, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, whose groundbreaking accomplishments as a business leader and entrepreneur have shattered barriers and opened doors for others to follow.

As we celebrate these exceptional individuals and the ongoing work of the Los Angeles Urban League, we are reminded that lasting progress is achieved through leadership, service, and a shared commitment to lifting others up. Thank you for your steadfast dedication to carrying forward the legacy of Whitney M. Young, Jr. and for helping build a brighter future for all Angelenos.

With deepest respect and appreciation,

TRACI PARK

Councilwoman, 11th District
City of Los Angeles

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Michael Weinstein



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on the occasion of its

**2026 Whitney M. Young, Jr.
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**Bridgid Coulter Cheadle, Michael Weinstein,
Jo-An Turman, Glynn Turman,
and Janice Bryant-Howroyd**



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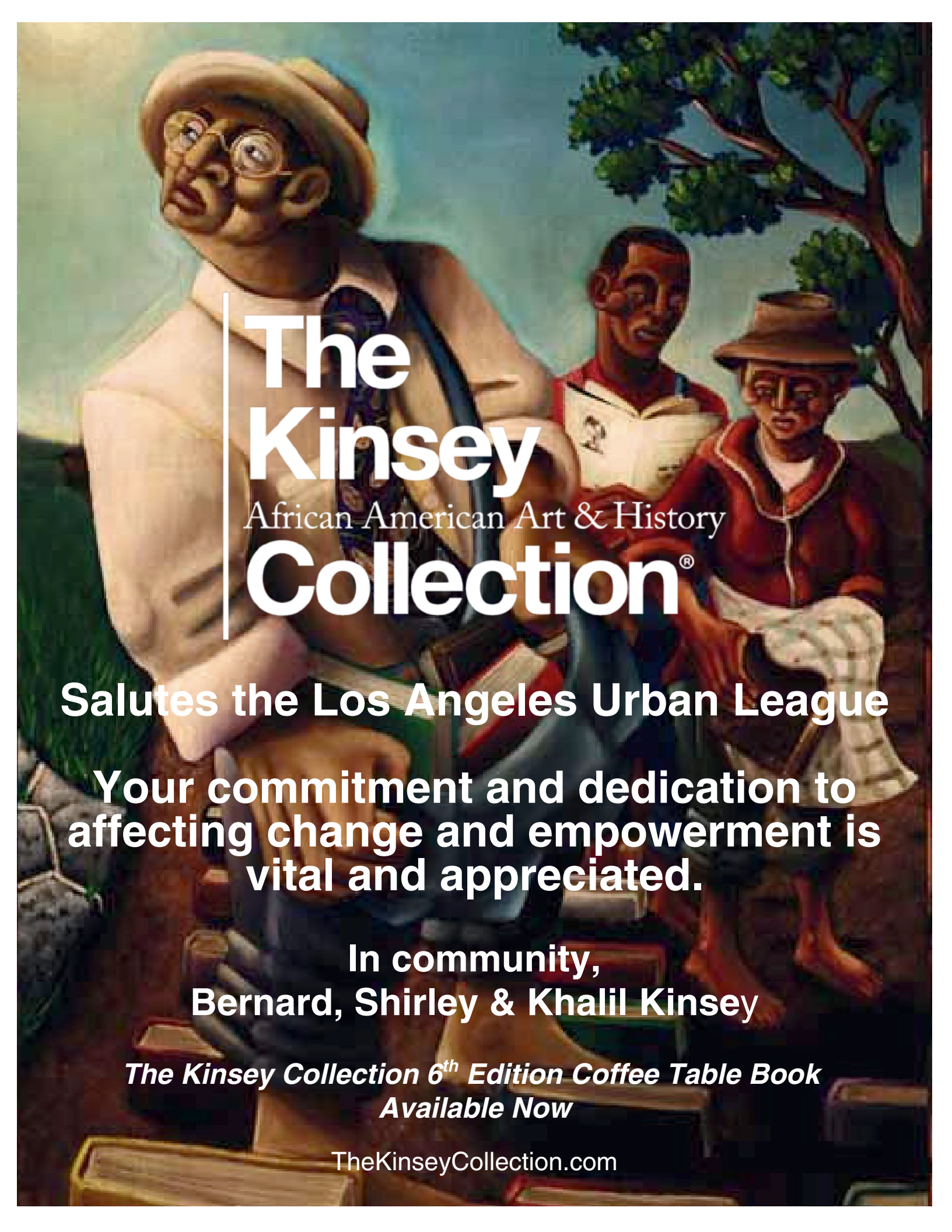
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Thank you Los Angeles Urban League for all
that you do to serve our community.

Congratulations to Tonight's Honorees

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We are proud to sponsor the Los Angeles Urban League
2026 Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards & Celebration



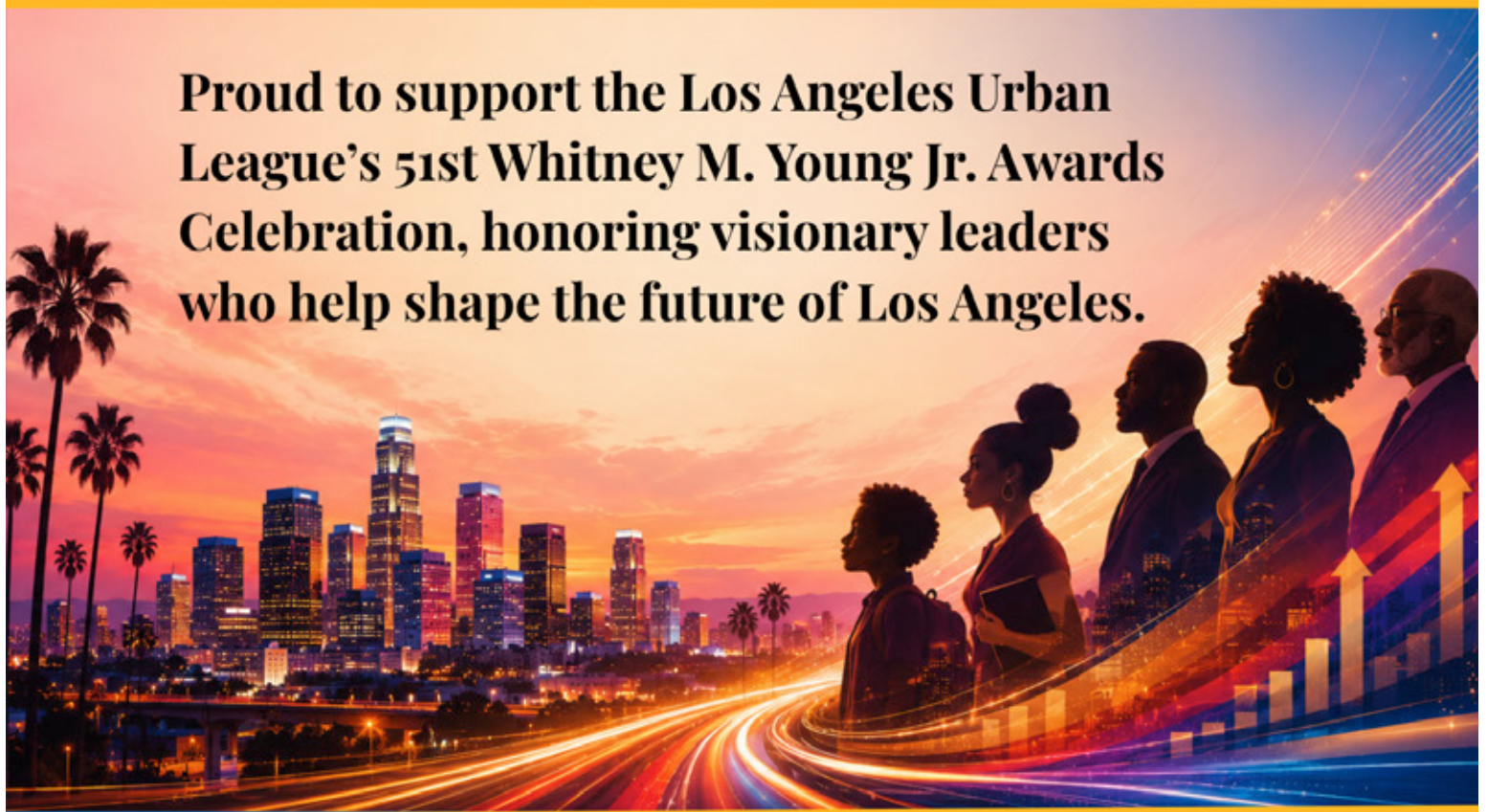
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LOS ANGELES URBAN LEAGUE

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**Deceased*



GUILDER OF THE YEAR

Mary Jan Roberts

Mary Jan Roberts has been an influential member of the Los Angeles Urban League Guild, since 2019. She has served on the Executive Board as Member-At-Large and currently holds the elected position of Parliamentarian.

In her leadership role, as Advocacy Chair, she has supported critical initiatives, such as, Reclaim the Vote and helped to engage and inform the community on civic participation and advocacy priorities.

Collaborating closely with fellow Guild members, Mary Jan contributes to the planning and implementation of programs aligned with the organization's mission and vision. 'M.J.' as some members call her also volunteers in support of the Los Angeles Urban League affiliate and has participated in multiple National Council of Urban League Guilds meetings, training sessions, and National Urban League conferences across the country. Her ongoing engagement includes virtual forums that deepen her understanding of effective strategies for advancing civil rights and community empowerment.

A California native, Mary Jan was raised in Compton and spent part of her youth in Val Verde, a historic community founded as a haven for African Americans. She brings more than 27 years of service in education, having worked with both Compton and Los Angeles Unified School Districts.

During her career, Mary Jan held numerous leadership roles within United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), including Area Board Member and House of Representatives delegate, and was elected to serve a three-year term as UTLA/National Education Association (NEA) Vice President. Her broader professional experience includes service as Chair of the California Teachers Association (CTA) Service Center Council, and two consecutive elected terms on the NEA Resolutions Committee. Earlier in her career, she worked with the Santa Fe Springs Office of the City Manager in California, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New York City Health Department, and the New York Amsterdam Newspaper.

Mary Jan is a devoted mother, aunt, sister and friend. She is grounded in a lifelong commitment to social justice, civic engagement, and community empowerment—values instilled by her parents, Jewel and Joffre. She is dedicated to advancing equity and ensuring that policies reflect and uplift the communities they are designed to serve. "To God be the Glory for ordering my steps; for leading and guiding and protecting me." Ase!



Los Angeles
Urban League Guild



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Celebrating the
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SYNTHIA SAINTJAMES, DHL

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At the age of five, Synthia SAINT JAMES announced from the porch of her family's brownstone in the Bronx, New York that she would be an artist when she grew up. At the age of twenty she sold her first painting to a co-worker, a lawyer at a mortgage insurance company on Fifth Avenue across the street from St. Patrick's Cathedral in Mid-Town Manhattan.

Synthia is a self-taught artist who is now an internationally renowned – most noted for designing the first Kwanzaa stamp for the U.S. Postal Service of which 318 million stamps were printed, and the original cover art of Terry McMillan's *Waiting to Exhale*. She is also an author, educator, speaker and experienced actor (in the seventies). She is now booking "Virtual Offerings" from Master Classes, Book Signings, and Conversations with the Artist nationally (will include international) from her home in Los Angeles.

Synthia works with many non-profit organizations and colleges with a concentration on HBCUs - creating commissioned signature paintings for fundraising, celebrations, collections and virtual speaking engagements. Most recently she created the 20th anniversary painting for the National CARES Mentoring Movement, and this year's Black History Month celebration for the California Endowment Foundation. Synthia received the Trumpet Award in the Arts in 2010 and is honored to have one of her paintings chosen and included in the Obama Presidential Museum's Permanent Collection in Chicago.

A sample of her fine art collectors includes Glynn Turman (tonight's honoree), Brenda Russell, Jenifer Lewis, Randy Crawford, Danny Glover, and Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Alice Walker (*The Color Purple*) along with the late Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr, Actor Art Evans and the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Charles Fuller (*A Soldier's Story - The Play*).



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 on another successful year!**



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SoCalGas congratulates the 2026 award recipients for their commitment and hard work in helping make Los Angeles a better place. We're inspired to serve and support our communities so that everyone has the power to contribute, connect, and thrive. Together, let's celebrate!

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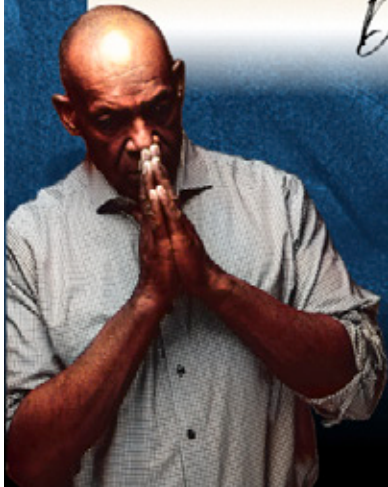
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These prayers are my spiritual journal of my journey through life. Having defeated cancer twice and watching my son go through his health challenges, speaking to God was my way of finding strength in the storm, hope in the unknown, and peace in the midst of pain.

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The University of Southern California is proud to stand alongside the Los Angeles Urban League, and President & CEO, Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, in the enduring work of building equity and expanding opportunity across our region.

We extend our deepest congratulations to tonight's honorees, whose dedication leaves a lasting mark on the communities we are all called to serve.

Fight On!



**Congratulations to this year's
Whitney M. Young Jr. Awards honorees
for their transformative leadership in uplifting
community and advancing the future!**

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