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## Black journalists to discuss immigration, civil rights, digital media at southeast conference

*Congressman Arthur Davis will deliver keynote address recognizing excellence in coverage of southern African-Americans and issues at the Chuck Stone Salute to Excellence Awards gala*

*(Updated on March 5)*

WASHINGTON February 23, 2007 - Black journalists from Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas will gather for the 2007 Region III Conference of the National Association of Black Journalists. This years theme, Bridging the Gap: Career Development, Technology and Cultural Understanding will focus on the transformation of journalism to digital media and the impact of immigration on African-American communities in the South.

The conference, hosted by the Montgomery Association of Black Journalists, will take place March 8-10 at the Embassy Suites Montgomery.

This years regional conference is going to be one to remember," said Region III Director Tammy Carter, a columnist for the Orlando Sentinel. Just being in Montgomery, the place where the civil rights movement was born should inspire us to continue the journalistic excellence established by those black journalists who came before us. As the journalism industry goes through a transitional phase, we will gain knowledge and understanding at this conference to not only sustain us but push us forward.

The Saturday morning workshop, Keeping the dream (and the story) alive: Covering the history of civil rights, will explore the civil rights movement and feature discussions with black journalists who covered it.

Saturday activities will also include a civil rights tour, led by Dr. Richard Bailey, author of "They Too Call Alabama Home: African American Profiles 1800-1999." Attendees will have the opportunity to visit the Rosa Parks Museum and Library, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church and Parsonage, Civil Rights Memorial, Alabama Archives and History Building, Alabama State Capitol and the first White House of the Confederacy.

**Atlanta Magazines Chandra Thomas, Birmingham's Roy Williams and student Rony Camille, among Chuck Stone Salute to Excellence honorees**

Southern black journalists will be honored March 10 at the Chuck Stone Salute to Excellence Awards gala. This marks the second year for the awards which aside from honoring more than 30 journalists also honors former NABJ presidents who hail from the region. Each of the award winners will receive Chuck Stone Awards, named after NABJ's first national president. Honors include the Condace Pressley Journalist of the Year Award, Sidmel Estes-Sumpter Student Journalist of the Year, and the Will Sutton Community Service Award.

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Chandra R. Thomas, whose work in 2006 for Atlanta Magazine shed light on the lives of Katrina evacuees and brought national attention to sex offender laws, has been named the Condace Pressley Journalist of the Year. In 2006, Thomas scored on several big cover stories for Atlanta Magazine, including a profile on DeKalb County CEO Vernon Jones and a look at Katrina victims who relocated to Atlanta from New Orleans.

Words can't express how gratifying it is to be honored by my peers on a scale of this magnitude, Thomas said. It's an extra special honor to receive this award from an organization that has shaped and nurtured my journalism career since I was wet behind the ears as a college student.

Roy L. Williams, winner of the Will Sutton Community Service Award has been with the Birmingham News since 1989, spending the past 13 years as a business reporter. Williams started his career in 1988 at The Columbus Ledger-Enquirer and has won three Associated Press awards for reporting in Alabama and Georgia. Over the past year, he has been honored for community service by the Birmingham Emancipation Association, South Regions Minority Business Council and Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce. The Birmingham City Council also presented Williams with an Outstanding Citizen Award in 2005 for writing his memoirs, "911 God Help Us - A Journalist's Tale of Faith: How Losing a Brother in Sept. 11 Terrorist Attack Transformed Reporter into a Witness for God."

"I am pleasantly surprised to be honored by my fellow NABJ Region III members as a recipient of the Will Sutton Community Service Award for 2007. As someone who has overcome tragedy and adversity through the support of many others, I am a firm believer in giving back, Williams said.

Rony Camille, a student at North Carolina Central University, has been named Student Journalist of the Year. Camille is the editor of the NCCU student newspaper, The Campus Echo. As editor, he has kept the paper on the cutting edge, making it a state and regional force in print, while expanding its online brand. Camille was also one of the leading student journalists covering the Duke Rape Case, and served as a frequent commentator and contributor to local and national broadcasts.

NABJ Region III will open to the public a special town hall meeting on Immigration and Race, hosted by Bobbi Bowman, director of diversity for the American Society of Newspaper Editors. The panel will include Intelligence Report writer Brentin Mock; Isabel Rubio, executive director of the Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama; Sara Reynolds, outreach worker for the Southern Poverty Law Centers Immigrant Justice Project; and Patricia Ice, immigration attorney and columnist based in Jackson, Miss.

Immigration from Mexico along with the traditional black population are changing the face of the Deep South. In the next 20 years, Mississippi will be a majority minority state. The changing face of the South from white to brown is the best story of our lives for journalists, Bowman says.

The conference will culminate with a scholarship fund-raising event presented by the Montgomery Area Association of Black Journalists. Proceeds will go toward scholarships for the education of future journalists in the Montgomery area.

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*An advocacy group established in 1975 in Washington, D.C., NABJ is the largest organization of journalists of color in the nation, with more than 4,100 members, and provides educational, career development and support to black journalists worldwide.*

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