

# Illinois' Black Legislators to Host Two-Day Community Engagement Summit and Scholarship Gala

**Nationally renowned economist and syndicated columnist Julianne Malveaux to Keynote Gala; Roland S. Martin and Cliff Kelley of Chicago's WVON 1690 AM to moderate workshops**

MATTESON, Ill. – Oct. 11 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – For the first time in five years and just five days before the upcoming mid-term election, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus (ILBC) will host a state-wide conference in hopes of engaging community activists, religious and business leaders and concerned citizens on a wide variety of issues. The two-day summit will take place Thursday and Friday, November 2 – 3, 2006 at the Matteson Holiday Inn located in south suburban Matteson Illinois.

Themed “Strengthening Ties and Empowering Communities,” the conference will explore everything from healthcare disparities in African-American communities to education funding reform. Throughout the conference, attendees will be encouraged to offer practical solutions to the issues presented.

“With the timing of this event so close to the mid-term elections, we intend to spark enthusiasm and a renewed commitment among the voters of Illinois to stay engaged in the process and be willing to speak truth to power,” commented Rev. James Meeks, State Senator (D-15th) and ILBC Joint Chair.

“Our hope is that this conference will help us tap into the concerns of our constituents and build our agenda for the future,” said Robin Kelly, State Representative (D-38th) and Conference Chair.

Kelly added that the highlight of the conference will be the scholarship gala, which will take place Friday evening, November 3rd. Several Illinois students will receive generous scholarships to help offset the cost of their college education.

Keynoting the gala will be economist and syndicated columnist Dr. Julianne Malveaux. Known nationally for her no non-sense perspective on politics, race and wealth, Malveaux's speech will focus on how African-Americans can use wealth to leverage political power.

Conference workshops will feature panelists from businesses throughout the state including Apple Computer and Harmony Health Plan. Roland S. Martin and Cliff Kelley of Chicago's WVON 1690 AM will serve as workshop moderators along with several Black Caucus members.

More than 500 Illinois residents are expected to attend the event. The deadline for registrations is Friday, October 27, 2006. For more information, contact the ILBC office at 217-544-0444.

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