

27th Annual SFAACC Juneteenth Luncheon Big Hit, Big Success, Big Business!

The San Francisco African American Chamber of Commerce Juneteenth Luncheon

Affirms community and stimulates business.

San Francisco-Community honors were the highlight of the 27th Annual San Francisco African American Chamber of Commerce (SFAACC) Juneteenth Luncheon as over 500 business and community leaders gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of three San Franciscans and two nonprofits.

Juneteenth celebrations were kicked off last week by the SFAACC Luncheon held June 16 at the Hyatt Regency in San Francisco. With the theme "Determining Our Future, Beyond Business Survival," Nathaniel Ford, Theresa DeRouen, Lola Whittle, The Hunter's Point Family and The African American Arts and Culture Complex were honored for their positive impact in San Francisco."

The Juneteenth luncheon not only celebrates African Americans, it also celebrates our overall community and gives the wider community an opportunity to see the positive things occurring in San Francisco that don't necessarily make it in the daily media," said Brigette LeBlanc, President of LeBlanc and Associates and co-chair of the event. "It's amazing to also note the number of new contacts people make and the new business deals that eventually arise."

"Everyday people like our honorees are working hard to make a difference in the community and the quiet work of people like **Lola Whittle, Nathaniel Ford** and **Theresa DeRouen** is making an impact to improve our city, so it is an honor for us to vocalize what they are too busy to highlight," said Cheryl Smith, Community Relations Director for Lennar Corporation and co-chair of the Juneteenth luncheon. "We're shouting out so to speak to affirm them and to let the wider community know of their accomplishments which also affirm our entire City.

"Brigette LeBlanc, SFAACC Board Secretary and Co-Chair of the Luncheon presented **The SFAACC Outstanding African American Business to Theresa DeRouen**, owner of The Monte Carlo Restaurant and Bar operated since 1989 in the Bayview District by.

Michael Baines, SFAACC Board Member, presented **the SFAACC Public Service Award to Nathaniel Ford**, Executive Director and CEO of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority.

Lola Whittle, a native San Francisco resident in the Bayview Hunters Point, for more than 45 years received **The SFAAC Earl White Lifetime Achievement** presented by Jacques White, the son of the late Earl White, a dynamic and instrumental businessman, who served as President of the San Francisco Black Chamber of Commerce and National President of the United States Black Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Kemp introduced Wells Fargo executive Linda Debo, who presented **The Wells Fargo Outstanding CBO Award to the Hunter's Point Family (HPF)** founded in 1997 by **Lena Miller**, native and resident of the Bayview Hunter's Point, serving promising youth in difficult situations.

James McGhee, SFAACC Treasurer presented **the AT & T Outstanding CBO Award to the African American Art and Culture Complex represented by London Breed**, who was recognized for her leadership of a great team of staff and volunteers in making the complex a thriving community force.

The awards culminated with SFAAC Board President Fred Jordan presenting the **SFAAC Beyond the Call of Duty Award to Brigitte LeBlanc**. "We're pleased to take a moment to recognize our own. Brigitte LeBlanc has worked beyond the call of duty giving of her time, talent and treasure," said Fred Jordan, President of SFAAC Board of Directors. "We need to recognize our internal champion as well. We would not be here without the work of so many unsung heroes of the chamber both past and present. Brigitte is one example of the excellence we find among our fellows. Thank you for being here to honor her and all of our honorees today."

With the entertaining **A.J. Kemp of KBLX** as Master of Ceremonies and music by **Jaye and Friends**, the event was a business mixer, awards luncheon and 'old school' town hall fellowship, was enjoyed by all. In concert with African American Traditions, **the Reverend Renard D. Allen of Third Baptist Church** provided the Invocation and led the singing of the Negro National Anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson. Sponsors for the event included: **Wells Fargo, AT& T, Lennar Urban, Bank of America, US Bank, Morongo Casino Resort & Spa, The San Francisco Housing Authority and First Republic Bank**.

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