

# Gaming leader Creighton wins Trumpet Award

By Tasha Pope  
Sentinel-Voice

Lorenzo Creighton is President and Chief Operating Officer of MGM Mirage's New York-New York Hotel & Casino, received a Trumpet Award on Monday in Atlanta.

The annual Trumpet Awards were created in 1993 by long-time civil rights activist Xernona Clayton to honor African-Americans who reach great heights in their careers in the fields of law, business, politics, medicine and entertainment and help other people along the way.

Among the nominees were entertainers Usher and Stevie Wonder, actress Vivica A. Fox, and civil rights advocates and humanitarians Rev. C. T. Vivian and Archbishop Desmond Tutu and others.

"To sit with Desmond

Tutu and Usher, who have made such an impact in our society was a real humbling experience," Creighton said.

"When I look at the people in the past, so many pioneers are included in that group [past Trumpet awardees]. It's such a great honor to be included," Creighton added.

Singer Beyonce Knowles, former Detroit mayor Dennis Archer and actor Sidney Poitier, to name a few, are Trumpet winners of the past.

Now, Creighton's name is etched on the Trumpet Award winners list.

If you take a hindsight glance at Creighton's career, one could question how he ended up in the gaming industry in the first place.

"I got into it [the gaming industry] and I liked it. It was such a fun business. It's always changing," Creighton explained.



New York-New York property president Lorenzo Creighton received a Trumpet Award during ceremonies in Atlanta.

He has served as an attorney, judge and even a high school teacher.

"I always wanted to see what it was like to do different things," Creighton said.

He began his gaming industry quest in Mississippi where he became director of the Mississippi Gaming Commission. After working in the gaming industry for a while, Creighton decided to relocate to Las Vegas because, "I always wanted to run a casino on the Strip in Las Vegas," Creighton explained.

Once he and his family relocated to Nevada, he made history by becoming the first and only African-American to lead a major gaming property on the Las Vegas Strip when he became president of the Flamingo Hilton in Las Vegas.

After transferring from Caesars Entertainment

Group, Creighton in 2005 was able to gain the position he holds now at the MGM's New York-New York property. Creighton manages 2,600 employees and over 2,000 hotel rooms for the corporation.

Creighton resides here with his wife, Lisa, and their three youngest children. With a stack of career accomplishments, he said he feels especially privileged to have received a Trumpet.

"It's truly an honor to receive this award. You work hard, and one day, you achieve success," he said.

"When someone honors you, it's icing on the cake. It's a good feeling," Creighton said.

The 2006 Trumpet Awards are scheduled for broadcast on TV One, and tapes of the ceremony will be available to public schools throughout the country.

## Belafonte

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shipped oil to the people of the South Bronx and even Massachusetts.

Berated in the White-owned media following the "Bush is a terrorist" analysis he delivered a few weeks ago, Belafonte could be mistaken for Kanye West, who determined in the wake of Katrina during a live televised fundraising effort that "Bush doesn't like Black people."

Belafonte brushed off the banshee critics.

"I'm not running for office, but I'm not running for the border, either," he said. Having to bear the burden of adversity is nothing new, he noted. Black folks have

"survived centuries of terror — the greatest terror of all was slavery." After 9-11, "we decided that Osama bin Laden was the terrorist." Now, terror rains down from an individual who may have usurped the presidency. "It's dubious how he got there," said Belafonte, and he "seizes upon the fear and rage [and vulnerability] of a nation which had just been assaulted. ... He lied to the people of this nation, distorted the truth, declared war on a nation who had not attacked us... put America's sons and daughters in harm's way... and destroyed the lives of tens of thousands of [Iraqi] women and children who had nothing to do with

it. It was an act of terror. Those who commit acts of terror are usually defined as terrorists."

The crowd soaked in all he said, but church being church, and Black folk being Black folk, several hundred responded orally to just about every word he said.

During Katrina, while thousands of people were drowning, on the first day Bush was playing golf, Belafonte said. Days later, he visited the area briefly. But when you leave an "abyss of fear, that's an act of terror."

Then he addressed the

prison system. "America has the largest prison population in the world," he said, "and the majority of folk therein are Black people."

As a matter of public policy, prisons are being thrown up with a speed surpassing healthcare centers, churches and schools, Belafonte said, and as the system is being turned over to the private sector, rest assured, everything is geared up to fill those cells. No profit comes from empty cots, so here come the draconian laws to ensure the bottom line is maximized.

"King and Nelson Mandela were called terrorists. That turned out to be false [and they became known] as some of the most honorable men of our time," he said.

Belafonte recalled that back in his early activist days he had been spied upon by the CIA; now it is Homeland Security monitoring everyone he talks to. "The CIA followed me everywhere. They said I was a terrorist. Now, in these final days, Homeland Security is investigating everything." Perhaps they figure him a terrorist, he

concluded, smiling broadly.

Later, Belafonte stepped up his criticism of the Bush administration, particularly the Department of Homeland Security.

"We've come to this dark time in which the new Gestapo of Homeland Security lurks here, where citizens are having their rights suspended," he said at the Arts Presenters Members Conference. "You can be arrested and not charged. You can be arrested and have no right to counsel."

Nayaba Arinde writes for the Amsterdam News.

## Gordon

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A struggle which, he said, needs to become more alive. Times are not as good as they could be, Gordon said. "We need an active Civil Rights Movement."

He said that it is important to recognize that the mission that King and other activist fought for is still not completed. Gordon said that although he celebrates and honors King's life, it is risky to celebrate his mission since it was never finished. "Civil Rights still has a lot of work," he said. "I'm in search of a recommitment to the work that hasn't been finished."

Gordon gave examples to show the uncompleted mission. From the voter's ID requirement in Georgia to the recent decision by Governor Schwarzenegger allowing the execution of Tookie Williams, Gordon indicated that many of the inequalities Black America faced 50 years ago still exist today.

"The mission has not been accomplished, the work has not been done, the race has not been won," Gordon repeated several times.

"Dr. King focused on the community, not on himself. If we choose to adopt [his way of thinking] we will all be agents of social change," Gordon said. "We must make it our problem."



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