

# CBC lawmakers garner new power at conference

## Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON - The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference this week, "Unleashing Our Power," will unabashedly challenge legislators and citizens to use their collective power to level the playing field for African-Americans and recognizes the historic number of CBC members leading congressional committees, organizers say.

House Majority Whip, Rep. James Clyburn, D-S.C., will join the four major committee leaders — Reps. Charles Rangel of New York, chair of Ways and Means; John Conyers, D-Mich., chair of Judiciary; Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., chair of Homeland Security; and Stephanie Tubbs-Jones of Ohio, chair of Standards of Official Conduct, will kick off the glitzy D.C. conference with a welcome ceremony.

Del. Donna M. Christensen of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Rep. G. K. Butterfield of North Carolina are this year's ALC co-chairpersons.

Both serve on the CBCF board of directors and have been instrumental in the foundation's economic development programs.

"My colleague, Mr. Butterfield, and I want this conference to bring generations of leaders together to

reflect on conditions in our communities, share ideas and solutions and enliven our desire for change," Del. Christensen said.

Rep. Butterfield said: "African Americans must address the countless disparities that affect our quality of life. Coming out of ALC, we must harness our power and renew our commitment toward strengthening our families and communities."

Among the staple events, the Children's Defense Fund's Marian Wright Edelman will lead the National Town Hall meeting discussion, "Disrupting the Prison Pipeline."

Edelman, Michael Eric Dyson, George C. Fraser and Russell Simmons are among notables expected at the four-day conference featuring dozens of policy forums, general sessions, exhibits, a job fair, book signings and networking opportunities.

On average, 20,000 people focusing on issues impacting African-Americans and the African Diaspora attend ALC each year.

"We are planning an ALC filled with dynamic social and policy content that will leave our conference audience well-informed and motivated to make a difference," said Elsie L. Scott, Ph.D., president and CEO of the foundation, which produces

the conference.

ALC raises funds for the foundation's research, scholarship, fellowship and internship programs as well as its economic development and public health initiatives.

A new addition to the conference is a networking luncheon. Meant for seasoned professionals, the event will allow attendees with similar interests and backgrounds to interact in a semi-informal setting. A directory of participants will be posted online at [www.cbefinc.org](http://www.cbefinc.org) after the event.

"Attendees will get to share a lunch table with persons in their fields — or with those in other fields, if so desired — to exchange ideas and contact information that will be mutually beneficial," Scott said. "George C. Fraser, with his proven experience in effective networking, will share tips and time will be set aside after the speech for the

attendees to put those tips into action right away."

The CBCF Emerging Leaders series will offer multiple sessions connecting the nation's powerbrokers with emerging professionals to discuss strategies for personal and community development. On Sept. 27, Victoria Rowell, the award-winning actress, dancer and author, will host the Instant Apprentice Luncheon, during which participants will sit with executives and leaders in business, government, education, sports and non-profit organizations. Recording artist/entrepreneur Percy Miller (a.k.a. Master P.) and Michael Eric Dyson are confirmed for Friday panels.

With its Future Focus Series, the Foundation's Center for Policy Analysis and Research will feature members of Congress, academics, policy practitioners and experts will cover topics of edu-

cation, affordable housing, economic development and public health. A discussion on mental health issues facing African-Americans will highlight the CPAR luncheon.

CBC members will lead their own forums on education, health care, the environment, economic development, criminal justice, housing, transportation and international affairs. Brain trusts, extended panel discussions resulting in legislative action plans, are also planned.

The CBC Spouses will honor Quincy Jones, the legendary entertainer, and others during a Celebration of Leadership for the Visual and Performing Arts at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. That same day, the Spouses and CBC members will join together to provide food, clothing and health services to families at a homeless shelter initiative — So

Others Might Eat, or SOME.

Conyers will present a Jazz Issue Forum and Concert, in which renowned musicians showcase their talents after focusing on the roots and importance of preserving the music. Others seeking spiritual uplift may attend the Gospel Extravaganza and the Annual Prayer Breakfast, featuring gospel sensation Byron Cage, on Saturday.

Later that evening, Oscar-winning actor Louis Gossett Jr. and actress Gabrielle Union will co-host the Annual Awards Dinner, where thousands will join the CBC and CBCF in honoring the contributions of outstanding individuals for their contributions to the community and the nation.

Among the hottest tickets is the Black Party. This year, the event at Love nightclub on features Mya, the Grammy-winning, multi-platinum artist.

## Gingrich: Skipping Black forum wrong

(AP) - Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich said Tuesday that top tier Republican presidential candidates are making a mistake by skipping a forum focused on issues of importance to Black voters.

Gingrich, in an interview with ABC's "Good Morning America," urged the leading candidates to reconsider their decision not to participate in the forum this week at Baltimore's Morgan State University, an HBCU member campus, to be moderated by talk show host Tavis Smiley and aired by PBS.

"I'm puzzled by their decision. I can't speak for them. I think it's a mistake. I wish they would change their minds — they still have a few days — and I wish they would in fact go to the debate Thursday night," said Gingrich, who is considering entering the race for the GOP nomination.

The top four candidates in the GOP race — former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson, Arizona Sen. John McCain and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney — all declined to participate in the forum citing scheduling conflicts and fundraising pressures.

Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and other long shot GOP candidates who have agreed to participate "deserve some praise for showing up and for carrying the message," Gingrich said. "I think Republicans could have, if they had the nerve to do it, a tremendous message," Gingrich said. "There are a lot of good cases to be made that the African-American community has been hurt more by the failures of government than any other community."

Earlier this month, seven of eight Democratic candidates participated in a debate aired by Univision, the Spanish language TV network. A Univision-sponsored GOP debate was postponed after McCain alone among the top tier Republicans agreed to participate.

## Your Horoscope Says... Sept. 27-Oct. 3

### ARIES

It's best to keep your opinions to yourself this week, as many will be experiencing minor irritations and general grumpiness. Let others be who they are. You are a beacon of serenity. Others will notice.

Soul Affirmation: As chances come around again. I take advantage of them.

Lucky Numbers: 21, 50, 54

### TAURUS

You are often superb at exercising good judgment and rational decision-making. Yet sometimes you are rash. Flip to the observant side of your mentality this week. You will soon find yourself in a situation where there will be strife if you are not careful.

Soul Affirmation: A cheerful soul should be wrapped in a cheerful package.

Lucky Numbers: 22, 36, 44

### GEMINI

Just to prove to yourself once again how lucky you are, you should fly into the face of bad predictions. Gamble this week in business, relationships, love — something. Remain truly confident that things will come out in a way that will satisfy you.

Soul Affirmation: Change is my middle name.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 28, 37

### CANCER

It's a great week to tell somebody you are close to that you love them. Saying it aloud gives you energy, and of course your designated adoree will be delighted! Keep the big picture in mind this week and you'll feel completely buoyant.

Soul Affirmation: I keep my eyes open for business opportunities this week.

Lucky Numbers: 13, 30, 45

### LEO

Keep focused. Your energies are likely to be spread out this week. Your attention is likely to be pulled in many directions. Let yourself be seduced by the things that interest you most. Concentrate on your affairs. Others need you, but they can wait.

Soul Affirmation: I find a source of strength in someone I love.

Lucky Numbers: 7, 20, 21

### VIRGO

Hardly anyone alive learns new skills in an instant, so cut yourself some slack if you feel you've made a beginner's mistake somewhere. Mistakes are part of the learning process that is called Life, so self-correct and proceed with happiness.

Soul Affirmation: I let go and let the spirit take control.

Lucky Numbers: 20, 42, 54

### LIBRA

This week will bring a tendency to dwell on a past betrayal. Your feelings of suspicion are well founded. However, do not personalize it. Work against the harmful act but not against the person who committed it.

Soul Affirmation: I am what I consistently do.

Lucky Numbers: 5, 6, 23

### SCORPIO

Look forward to excellent financial news based on something you're likely to do this week. Wow! It's about time. This week might be an excellent week to window shop for a dream vacation or luxury purchase. You can even window shop in your imagination for the best possible dream vacation location.

Soul Affirmation: Smooth communications is the key to my success this week.

Lucky Numbers: 8, 14, 44

### SAGITTARIUS

You'll have a busy week, as the energy around you seems supercharged. With everyone rushing about, you'll wonder how you'll get anything done, much less the things you feel you must get done. Not to worry. Stay calm and flexible and a way will be found.

Soul Affirmation: Slow and steady is an enjoyable way to go.

Lucky Numbers: 1, 6, 55

### CAPRICORN

Stand up and get ready. Be a public speaker this week. Any subject you choose is ripe for your "rap." Spin the tale. Tell the story. People will be fascinated by the way you see things. They'll be impressed. Watch out for a jealous friend when attention is on you!

Soul Affirmation: I make the first step and the universe will come to my aid.

Lucky Numbers: 25, 32, 53

### AQUARIUS

Be as sharp as you can be this week. Make being alert a personal challenge. Watch carefully for details that might otherwise escape your notice as you search for the best way to get things done at work. Be steadfast in your determination and don't be pulled into conflict with coworkers.

Soul Affirmation: There are other fish in the sea waiting for me.

Lucky Numbers: 17, 23, 27

### PISCES

You may feel a bit crabby about your health this early this week. If you feel you need a physical checkup, make the appointment this week. If you want to feel and look better this week, skip lunch and take a walk instead.

Soul Affirmation: Truth is revealed in the smallest grain of sand.

Lucky Numbers: 29, 41, 52