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N E W S R E L E A S E

Women of Color Foundation Celebrates 9th Year

Cleveland, Ohio ---- The Women of Color Foundation is proud to announce the celebration of its ninth year, with the 2011 Personal and Professional Development Retreat for Women of Color, on Thursday, April 7 and Friday, April 8. For the first time in the history of the organization, the event will take place at the Case Western Reserve University, George S. Dively Executive Education Center (11240 Bellflower Road, Cleveland, Ohio).

The Retreat is being hosted by Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic, with the support of Kaiser Permanente, Dominion East Ohio, Fifth Third Bank, Forest City Enterprises, American Greetings Corporation, Medical Mutual of Ohio, United Airlines, JumpStart Inclusion Advisors, and media sponsors, WEWS NewsChannel 5, the Cleveland Women's Journal, the Call & Post Newspaper, Kaleidoscope Magazine, Clear Channel Outdoor Media, Max N' Out Entertainment, The Women's Book and The Village Television.

The retreat is a unique concept and forum designed to facilitate the collaboration, networking, mentoring, sharing, executive development and training of women and girls. Numerous programs with panelists are planned for the two-day conference, which will include an evening reception on Thursday, and a luncheon and "COLORS" Networking Tea on Friday.

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Women of Color Retreat - Cleveland

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Designed to leave women with a greater sense of “empowerment,” participants will be encouraged by both local and prominent national speakers to actively participate in workshops discussing topics relating to health, career, entrepreneurship, relationships and more. Says Alexandria Johnson Boone, Founder and Chairwoman of The Women of Color Foundation, “Based on ongoing discussions with a variety of women from different backgrounds and cultures across the country, we learned that all of us felt it was critical for us, as women, to share our successes, triumphs and yes, our failures with our peers and younger women coming along behind us. Thus, we developed the Foundation in 2003,” she said.

“It’s hard to believe that we’re celebrating our ninth year,” says Boone. “Since we began, over 4,000 Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Chicago women have benefitted from our conferences. The networking opportunities, jobs, careers, businesses and friendships that have arisen out of our events, are countless. I’ve heard so many stories about how women have connected with someone at our events, and how that connection has resulted in a life-changing experience or significant career opportunities. That’s the true power of the Women of Color Foundation,” she said.

Notable professional women will serve as moderators, panelists and featured speakers of the following scheduled workshops and sessions: *“Career GPS: Women's Strategies for Navigating the New Corporate Landscape”*; *“Developing a Comprehensive Career Plan and Making it Work For You”*; *“How to JumpStart your Business or Business Idea.....A Practical “how to” Workshop!”*; *“Relationship and Reputation Management..... Strategies for Earning Professional Respect in One’s Career and Community”*; and *Cleveland Clinic’s Annual Women’s Health Forum “Elder Care and Women as Caregivers: Understanding the Demands and Options”*.

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Featured guests will include: Marilyn Sanders Mobley, Ph.D., Vice President, Office of Inclusion, Diversity & Equal Opportunity and Professor of English, Case Western Reserve University; Carmen Ortiz McGee, Vice President, Investor Relations and Business Development, MayfieldGentry Realty Advisors, LLC, Detroit, MI; Ella L.J. Edmonson Bell, Ph.D Founder and President, ASCENT Leadership; Associate Professor of Business Administration, Amos Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College; and internationally recognized scholar, author, and consultant on race, gender, and social class in organizations; Diana Bilimoria, Ph.D., Professor of Organizational Behavior, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University; Caryl A. Hess, Ph.D., MBA, Director, Cleveland Clinic Academy; Pamela Noble, Global Director of Human Resources, Packaging Group, AkzoNobel; Donna L. Flynt, Manager, Workforce Diversity and Governance, Parker Hannifin Corporation; Darrin M. Redus, Sr., President, JumpStart Inclusion Advisors and Chief Economic Inclusion Officer, JumpStart, Inc.; Johnny L. Hutton, Jr., Vice President, JumpStart Inclusion Advisors; Gloria M. Ware, Senior Advisor, JumpStart Inclusion Advisors; A. Lamont Mackley, Senior Advisor, JumpStart Inclusion Advisors; and Ana Rosa Badillo, Business Analyst, JumpStart Inclusion Advisors; Charmaine Brown, Director, Diversity and Inclusion, Forest City Enterprises; Renita Jefferson, Human Resources, Director of Diversity & Inclusion, American Greetings Corporation; and more. Kimberly Gill, co-anchor of NewsChannel 5's "Good Morning Cleveland," will serve as Mistress of Ceremonies for the Friday Luncheon.

A variety of registration and sponsorship packages are available for the 9th Annual Personal and Professional Development Retreat for Women of Color, and other Women of Color events. For information on registration, including available scholarships, please contact 216-391-4300, ext. 307 or visit the website, www.womenofcolorfoundation.com.

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