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**MEMPHIS NAACP ANNOUNCES SUSAN L. TAYLOR AS SPEAKER
FOR 37th ANNUAL GALA**
*Editor Emerita of Essence Magazine & Founder of National Cares Mentoring Movement
Tapped to Address Memphis*

(February 7, 2012 - Memphis, TENN) – The Memphis Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) will host its annual Freedom Fund Gala at the Memphis Cook Convention Center on March 20, 2013 with Susan L. Taylor as the keynote speaker. Taylor is the Editor Emerita of *Essence Magazine* and founder of National Cares Mentoring Movement.

At *Essence* for nearly three decades, Taylor was the driving force behind one of the most celebrated Black-owned businesses in the world serving as its fashion and beauty editor, editor-in-chief and editorial director. For 27 years, she also authored one of the magazine's most popular columns, "In the Spirit." She was the first and only African American woman to be recognized by the Magazine Publishers of America and the first to be inducted into the American Society of Magazine Editors Hall of Fame. Taylor was the recipient of the NAACP's President Award for visionary leadership and has honorary degrees from more than a dozen colleges and universities.

Developed as a call to action, Taylor founded National Cares Mentoring Movement to serve a massive campaign to recruit one million able adults to help secure children who are in peril and losing ground. "Not on our watch!" says Taylor. "Our children are the mothers and fathers of tomorrow, and their future is in our hands."

Taylor is also the cofounder of Future PAC, the first national political action committee devoted to providing a network of support and sources of funding for progressive African American women seeking federal and state-level political offices. She is the co-chair with Danny Glover of Shared Interest, a capital campaign to raise money to build housing in rural areas of South Africa, and serves on the boards of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

For additional information about then gala, you may contact the Memphis Branch of the NAACP at 901.521.1343.

About the NAACP

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is the nation's oldest civil rights organization. The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of rights for all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.

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