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ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA MOURNS THE LOSS OF BENJAMIN HOOKS

Chicago, Illinois - April 15, 2010 - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority expressed profound sadness on the death of Dr. Benjamin Hooks. Hailing him as a “civil rights and human rights icon” the Sorority’s international president Barbara A. McKinzie praised him for his courage, strength and for being a champion for justice.

Recalling his journey to greatness, McKinzie noted that as executive director of the NAACP from 1977 to 1992, Dr. Hooks served the nation’s venerable civil rights organization during a period when the organization was going through turmoil. When he took on the position, membership was declining, along with the organization’s prestige. At the same time, the nation continued to need the type of outspoken leadership that the NAACP was legendary for providing.

Reflecting on how he plied his skills to guide the organization to the summit of worldwide influence, McKinzie said: “Through his leadership, charisma and ability to galvanize, Dr. Hooks took on these challenges, grew the organization and led the NAACP to a period of sustained greatness.”

She noted that his efforts were rightfully awarded, including receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the nation’s highest civil honor.

She said that leaders of his caliber are rare but that their heroic example of strength and fortitude should serve as an inspiration to everyone who aspires to make a difference.

McKinzie extended condolences to the NAACP family and to all who admire the life he led. She offered special words of comfort to his wife Frances, who was his steadfast partner in his life’s journey.

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