



### **ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA ASSAILS REMARKS OF DON IMUS AND BERNARD McGUIRK PRESIDENT URGES MEMBERS TO FLEX ECONOMIC MUSCLE**

Chicago, Illinois – April 10, 2007 - Alpha Kappa Alpha's International President, Barbara A. McKinzie, assailed Don Imus for his reprehensible characterization of the Rutgers Women's Basketball team and expanded her criticism to Bernard McGuirk, producer, whose callous remarks triggered the disrespectful exchange. She said she supports the sense of outrage that is enveloping the nation in the wake of these egregious remarks and believes he and McGuirk should, as a tandem, be fired. However, consistent with the economic theme that drives her administration, she asserted that the public should flex its economic muscle if powerful results are to be achieved.

Against this admonition, McKinzie urged the 200,000 members of the Sorority to divest of all stock in NBC, CBS and their parent companies; and to urge their families to do the same.

She said this is part of a multi-pronged strategy to address the economic and spiritual dynamics of this episode. As president of the world's oldest and largest sorority for college-educated African-American women, McKinzie said Alpha Kappa Alpha is a major stakeholder in protecting the image and self-actualization of black women.

In this vein, McKinzie noted that the language co-opted by McGuirk and Imus in their now-infamous exchange, was taken from the black rappers who have gotten rich and made white producers wealthy by defiling black women in their music. She said the offensive lyrics that invade the airways have created a climate where it is "acceptable" to defile black women.

"We must provide an atmosphere where our mothers, grandmothers, sisters, aunts and children will not be subjected to this degree of public disrespect. This can be most effectively achieved when we take away the economic incentive that says it's all right to utter such racist and sexist remarks. We must stand strong and stop buying the records whose hurtful lyrics degrade black women."

In her remarks, McKinzie recalled that the late C. Delores Tucker, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, waged a valiant—but lonely—crusade to expose the damage that these lyrics inflict on black women's psyches.

"She was vilified for her courageous stance," recalled McKinzie. "However, it was the right position because at its core was a resolve to derail the economic engine that creates this climate."

McKinzie said that, ultimately, the policy at the stations should change because the behavior cannot be changed.

“We can fire a Don Imus or Bernard McGuirk but unless there is a change in policy, another tandem will surface who will be equally offensive.”

McKinzie said this episode can result in a positive outcome if NBC, CBS and their owners craft a policy that will prevent any future shock jocks from coming on the air and assaulting the airwaves with their sexist and racist vitriol. She said such a “sincere” outreach can open up a national dialogue that can address the gulf that divides our nation.”

McKinzie said that Alpha Kappa Alpha and its talented core of members would serve as resources for such a landmark effort.

Until such a movement is launched, McKinzie urged members to divest themselves of stock in CBS, which is owned by Westinghouse Electric Company and is part of the Nuclear Utilities Business Group of British Nuclear Funds; and to sell all stock in MSNBC, which is co-owned by NBC (a subsidiary of General Electric) and Microsoft.

Founded in 1908, Alpha Kappa Alpha is the oldest and largest sorority of its kind with 200,000 members in over 900 chapters worldwide. Because of its stature and nearly 100-year-record of service, AKA is hailed as “America’s premiere Greek-lettered organization for Black women.” Its membership includes high-profile women from all walks of life and from all disciplines including astronaut and physician Dr. Mae Jemison, poet Maya Angelou, actress Phylicia Rashad, entertainer Gladys Knight, entrepreneur Suzanne de Passe, U.K. Member of Parliament Diane Abbott, performing artist Alicia Keys and a host of local, regional and national political leaders.

Barbara A. McKinzie is International President of Alpha Kappa Alpha and will serve through 2010. Because her term coincides with the Sorority’s Centennial in 2008, she is hailed as the Centennial National President and her term is characterized as the Centennial Administration. The theme of McKinzie’s administration is ESP, Economics, Service and Partnerships.

The Sorority will celebrate its 100-year anniversary in 2008 with a birthday celebration at its birth home at Howard University in January and with its Centennial Conference in July. Over 20,000 members are expected to converge upon Washington, D.C. to commemorate this milestone.

For more information on Alpha Kappa Alpha, log on to its web site at [www.aka1908.com](http://www.aka1908.com)

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