

DAVID A. THOMAS, PhD. ANNOUNCED KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR LOS ANGELES URBAN LEAGUE WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. AWARDS GALA

Dr. Thomas, President of Morehouse College, is a noted academic scholar, award winning author, and business consultant for 100 of the Fortune 500 companies.

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Cynthia Mitchell Heard

The Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL) is pleased to announce Dr. David A. Thomas, PhD., President of Morehouse College, will be the keynote speaker for their [Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Gala](#), which is scheduled to take place on the evening of Thursday, May 30, 2024, at the Fairmont Century Plaza Hotel, located at 2025 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, California 90067. Dr. Thomas is internationally recognized for his expertise in organizational management and higher education leadership. He is a noted academic scholar, award winning author, and business consultant for 100 of the Fortune 500 companies.

Since his installment at Morehouse College in January 2018, Dr. Thomas has led dynamic, purpose-driven advancement in Morehouse’s strategic and operational effectiveness, programmatic reach, and pedagogical innovation. Among other transformational successes, He has overseen a fundraising acceleration which has generated more than \$200 million since his arrival—a giving total during his tenure that is higher than during any other presidential tenure in the history of the college and has accelerated through a \$500 million comprehensive capital campaign. Under his leadership, Morehouse has extended its reach by launching its first online degree programs and has amplified its positioning as a center of intellectual discourse and social engagement in areas such as global leadership, professional equity, social justice, and innovation.

“We are honored to welcome Dr. David A. Thomas as the keynote speaker for this year’s Whitney

M. Young, Jr. Awards Gala,” said Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, President & CEO of the Los Angeles Urban League. “His unmatched expertise and visionary global insights will undoubtedly inspire and enlighten our guests, who will include alumni of Morehouse and Spelman Colleges.” Ms. Mitchell-Heard was appointed the organization’s President and CEO earlier this year, making history as the first woman in nearly a century to helm the iconic civil rights organization.

“It’s such an honor to have Dr. David Thomas as the Keynote Speaker for the Los Angeles Urban League Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Dinner. He is an extraordinary, visionary leader and scholar,” said Mattie McFadden-Lawson, Ambassador of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Gala. “As the President of Morehouse College, he has led with purpose, excellence, and integrity. As a Morehouse parent and two sons who are Morehouse Men—Michael A. Lawson, Jr. (Class of 2005) and Jonathan S. Lawson (Class of 2013), it has been a privilege to work closely with Dr. Thomas, creating graduates who are service-oriented and global leaders.”



Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, President & CEO, Los Angeles Urban League

Before becoming president of Morehouse, Dr. Thomas served as the H. Naylor Fitzhugh Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School, as dean and William R. Berkley Chair at Georgetown University’s McDonough School of Business, and as an assistant professor at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. He earned a Ph.D. in organizational behavior studies and a Master of Philosophy in organizational behavior, both from Yale University. He also earned a Master of Organizational Psychology from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Administrative Sciences from Yale College.

The annual Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awards Gala serves as a platform for the Los Angeles Urban League to celebrate achievements, thank its partners, and sponsors and raise awareness of LAUL’s mission to help African Americans and others in underserved communities achieve their highest true social parity, economic self-reliance, power, and civil rights. This year’s gala honorees include NOEL MASSIE, Chairman Emeritus of the Los Angeles Urban League, who will receive the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award; ROBERT SIMONDS, Founder & Chairman STX Entertainment and ANNE BIONDI SIMONDS, Founder & CEO, Muse Systems Enterprises, have garnered the John Mack Legacy Award; SANDRA JACKSON-DUMONT, Director & CEO of Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, will be awarded the Trailblazer Award and RON FRIERSON, Director of Economic Development of the Western U.S. Amazon, will be the recipient of the Visionary Award.

Attendees can expect an elegant evening featuring fine dining, live entertainment, and opportunities to connect with industry leaders, and influencers. Tickets for the gala are now available for purchase on the Los Angeles Urban League website at <https://laul.org/wmy/>.

Media

Ron H. Carter
The Carter Agency
+1 626-345-1413
tca@sbcglobal.net

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