

NAASC-LA Sisters' Awards Luncheon Honors Trailblazing Women, Raises Funds For Scholarships And Wildfire Relief

Vanessa Bell Calloway Serves as Host; Spelman Interim President Roz Brewer, Judge Mablean Ephriam, Dr. Carliss McGhee & Ashley Jackson Honored for Their Impact

HOLLYWOOD, CA, UNITED STATES, March 14, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Los Angeles chapter of the [National Alumnae Association of Spelman College \(NAASC-LA\)](#) hosted an unforgettable afternoon of celebration and purpose at the 29th Annual Sisters' Awards Luncheon in Hollywood, CA. This sold-out event, themed Roots, Resilience, and Radiance, honored extraordinary women whose leadership, perseverance, and innovation continue to shape industries and uplift communities. More than just a gathering, the event raised more than \$145K towards scholarship funds for young women from the Los Angeles area attending Spelman, ensuring that the next generation of leaders has the resources to thrive. A portion of the proceeds will also provide direct assistance to Spelman community members impacted by the recent Los Angeles-area wildfires.

Actress and producer Vanessa Bell Calloway served as event host, guiding attendees through an afternoon filled with powerful speeches, moving tributes, and historic recognition. Vanessa kicked off her remarks by sharing her longtime admiration for Spelman College and what she jokingly called her ongoing case of "Spelman Envy."

Although she attended a PWI, she expressed deep appreciation for the legacy, sisterhood, and



2025 NAASC-LA Sisters' Awards Honorees: Dr. Carliss McGhee (The Rooted Educator), Interim President Rosalind "Roz" Brewer (Legacy Leader), Ashley Jackson (Radiant Rising Star), and Judge Mablean Ephriam (Resilient Justice Advocate) were honored for their impact.

excellence of Spelman women—especially after watching her own daughters flourish at the college.

“I thought after writing checks for eight years straight, I’d finally be cured,” she quipped. “But watching my daughters thrive only made my ‘Spelman Envy’ worse! So when they asked me to host today, I said yes without hesitation—because this is about celebrating roots, resilience, and radiance, and ensuring that more young women have the opportunity to carry this legacy forward.”

Rosalind “Roz” Brewer C’84, Interim President of Spelman College and former CEO of Walgreens Boots Alliance, was recognized as the Legacy Leader for her trailblazing leadership in business, diversity, and corporate innovation, as well as her steadfast leadership at Spelman College and stepping into the role of Interim President to ensure the continuation of the institution’s legacy of excellence. Introduced by TV host, author, philanthropist and media executive, Shaun Robinson (C ’84), Brewer spoke passionately about her commitment to leadership and the Spelman community.

“Leadership isn’t about the titles we hold; it’s about the impact we make and the paths we pave for those who follow. At Spelman, we cultivate not just scholars, but trailblazers who confront challenges head-on and transform them into opportunities,” she shared. “I am deeply honored

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*Honoree Rosalind “Roz”
Brewer C’84, Interim President
of Spelman College*

to receive this recognition and want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Spelman alumnae, faculty, and students who inspire me every day. Thank you to NAASC-LA for your unwavering commitment to supporting our students and ensuring the legacy of excellence continues.”

The event also honored Judge Mablean Ephriam, best known for her time on *Divorce Court*, as the Resilient Justice Advocate, recognizing her decades of work in mentorship, family advocacy, and judicial reform.

“I stand [here](#) today as a testament to resilience—proof that when we refuse to take ‘no’ for an answer, when we push

forward despite obstacles, we can break down doors that were never meant to open for us,” said



Emmy Award winning journalist Shaun Robinson, Honoree Roz Brewer, and Host Vanessa Bell Calloway celebrate leadership and sisterhood on the Sisters' Awards Blue Carpet.

Judge Mablean in her acceptance speech. "My journey in law was not given to me; I fought for it, I demanded my seat at the table, and I encourage every young woman in this room to do the same. Stand firm, speak boldly, and never be afraid to claim what is rightfully yours."

Dr. Carliss McGhee, a dedicated educator and the founder of the Khocolate Keepsakes Children's Literacy Museum, received the Rooted Educator award for her lifelong commitment to literacy and empowerment. Rising actress and producer Ashley Jackson (C '20), daughter of Reverend Jesse Jackson, Sr. and Dr. Karin Stanford, was celebrated as the Radiant Rising Star, recognized for her emerging excellence in entertainment and social justice advocacy. Jackson, a proud Spelman alumna, actively supported Vice President Kamala Harris' Presidential campaign, aligning with her commitment to racial equity, reproductive rights, sensible gun legislation, and climate action.



Sponsored by Amazon Music, singer-songwriter Goapele delivers an unforgettable unplugged performance.

As the honorees reflected on their achievements, the afternoon reached another emotional high point with a breathtaking, unplugged performance by Goapele, courtesy of Amazon Music. The acclaimed Oakland-born singer-songwriter delivered a soulful tribute to the late Roberta Flack and Roy Ayers, seamlessly weaving their timeless classics into her own signature hits, including "Closer." Her stripped-down, acoustic set created an intimate and electrifying moment.

The room was filled with numerous esteemed figures across entertainment, business, and media, all coming together in celebration of the Spelman legacy. Among the notable attendees were legendary TV and film executive Suzanne de Passe, acclaimed actor and industry mentor Richard Lawson, Amazon Music's Phylcia Fant (C'2000), Amazon creative executive Traci Blackwell (C' 91), director and producer D'Angela Procter (C '91), Ms. Black California USA, Ke'Andra Levingston (C'2014), HBCUs in LA/EICOP founder Stacy Milner, and many more. Their presence underscores the deep respect and admiration for Spelman women and the impact they continue to make on the world.

The success of this year's luncheon was made possible with the support of its generous sponsors. The Law Offices of Sauda Johnson, PC served as the title sponsor, with major contributions from Amazon Music, Warner Bros. Discovery, the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation, Charles Drew University of Medicine, and additional community partners. Their commitment to education, leadership, and community upliftment was evident throughout the afternoon,

reinforcing the power of collective support in making lasting change.

The event concluded with one of Spelman's most cherished traditions—the singing of the Spelman Hymn. As all Spelman alumnae in attendance stood together in unity, their voices filled the ballroom, a powerful reminder of the sisterhood, resilience, and excellence that bind Spelman women across generations. The moment was both deeply moving and symbolic, serving as a perfect closing to an event that celebrated legacy and the power of collective impact.

With another successful event, the NAASC-LA Sisters' Awards Luncheon once again proved why it remains a premier event in celebrating the impact and brilliance of Spelman women. To contribute to the scholarship fund, donations are still being accepted at [NAASC-LA Donations](#).

To relive the best moments of the event, view the official event photos and video highlights [HERE](#).

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