

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 16, 2009

CONTACT: Jasmyne Cannick, (323) 295-1706

publicity@paff.org

PAFF NIGHT OF TRIBUTE NOMINATED FOR 2009 NAMIC VISION AWARD

WINNERS TO BE ANNOUNCED APRIL 17 IN BEVERLY HILLS, CA

Two-Hour Special Featured Jimmy Jean-Louis, Academy Award Nominated Actress Taraji P. Henson, Rev. Dr. Della Reese, Isaiah Washington, Idris Elba, Charles Burnett, Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks Sr., and Ghana's Akuyoe Graham

The **Pan African Film & Arts Festival's** (PAFF) 2008 **Night of Tribute** has been nominated for a **2009 NAMIC Vision Award** by the National Association for Multi-ethnicity in Communications (NAMIC). The prestigious entertainment industry award honors achievements in television programming diversity. A two-hour special broadcast internationally on the **Africa Channel**, including in the Caribbean and United Kingdom, the PAFF Night of Tribute was held at the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center on February 7, 2008 and was hosted by critically acclaimed actor **Jimmy Jean-Louis** ("Heroes"). The annual red carpet star-studded event honored the lives and bodies of work of pioneering film and visual arts talent. 2008 honorees included **Charles Burnett**, who received the PAFF Pioneer Award. **Rev. Dr. Della Reese**, who received the PAFF Lifetime Achievement Award. Actor **Idris Elba** received the PAFF Canada Lee Award. Academy Award nominated actress **Taraji P. Henson** ("*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*") received the PAFF Beah Richards Award. Los Angeles City Councilman **Bernard Parks Sr.**, received the PAFF Community Service Award along with **Diana Shannon-Young** who received PAFF's Artist Achievement Award. Additionally, The Africa Channel presented a posthumous Creative Achievement Award honoring "The Father of African Film" Senegalese film director, producer and writer **Ousamene Sembene**.

(more)

PAFF/ NAMIC VISION AWARD– Press Release – Page 2

During the broadcast, acclaimed Ghanaian actress **Akuyoe Graham** performed a scene from her award-winning one woman show “Spirit Awakening.” 2008 PAFF celebrity host actor **Isaiah Washington** (“Grey’s Anatomy”) joined the President of African Ancestry **Gina Paige** presenting each of the honorees with the results of their DNA tests of their African lineage.

The **15th Anniversary NAMIC Vision Awards** will be presented at a luncheon ceremony hosted by Access Hollywood’s **Shaun Robinson** on Friday, April 17, 2009 at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California.

The 2009 competition marks the expansion of the awards program with eligibility extended to national broadcast networks; local affiliates; local origination programs from cable operators; and VOD content produced for digital platforms. A total of 248 entries were received in the 16 award categories including Animation; Children’s; Comedy; Documentary; Drama; Foreign Language; Lifestyle; News/Informational; Original Movie or Special; Reality; Sports; Variety/Talk Show; Best Performance – Comedy; Best Performance – Drama; Digital Media (Short Form) and Digital Media (Long Form). Original programs that aired between the dates of October 1, 2007 and September 30, 2008 were eligible for submission.

The Pan African Film and Arts Festival (PAFF) was founded in 1992 as a non-profit corporation dedicated to the promotion of cultural and racial tolerance and understanding through the exhibition of film, art and creative expression. It is the PAFFs goal to present and showcase a broad spectrum of Black creative works, particularly those that reinforce positive images and help to destroy negative stereotypes. The PAFF believes film and art can lead to better understanding and foster communication between peoples of diverse cultures, races, and lifestyles, while at the same time, serve

(more)

PAFF/ NAMIC VISION AWARD– Press Release – Page 3

as a vehicle to initiate dialogue on the important issues of our times. For more information about PAFF, please visit www.paff.org.

The premiere of The Africa Channel in 2005 marked a milestone in U.S. television history: for the first time, American audiences were able to experience the daily successes, celebrations and challenges of people living throughout Africa , all via a general entertainment network. The channel launched with more than 1,600 hours of English-language programming, including news and information, travel, and lifestyle, music, soaps, talk, reality, feature films and special events. Long-time TV industry executives James Makawa, Jacob Arback and Richard Hammer founded the network, and its initial partners include Ambassador Andrew Young and his company, Goodworks International, Weller/Grossman Productions, and National Basketball Association stars Dikembe Mutombo and Theo Ratliff. For more information about the channel, please visit www.theafricachannel.com.

###