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**American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity Announces**

**Recipients for its Annual Awards**

***Leaders in the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Civil Rights Fields will be honored at the Association’s 41st National Conference and Annual Meeting in New Orleans***

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Washington, DC, May 26, 2015 - The American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity (AAAED), an organization of equal opportunity, diversity and affirmative action professionals, announced the recipients of its annual awards program. The awards will be conferred at the Association’s 41st National Conference and Annual Meeting themed *"Toward a More Perfect Union: Celebrating Fifty Years of Equal Opportunity."*  The meeting will be held at the Marriott New Orleans, 555 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA. The awards will be presented on Wednesday, June 3 from 12:00 noon - 1:45 pm.

* AAAED will honor **Dr. Norman C. Francis**, the president of Xavier University of Louisiana, with the Drum Major for Justice Award. Dr. Francis is currently the longest serving university president and will retire after 47 years of service. The Drum Major for Justice Award is a special acknowledgement of the extraordinary contributions that an organization or individual, including a public servant or one who has held an elective office or appointment to public service, has made to the cause of equity, access and diversity.
* **Georgia State University** will be the recipient of the Edward M. Kennedy Community Service Award. The Edward M. Kennedy Community Service Award is presented to an individual or organization demonstrating outstanding community service.
* **James S. Hoyte**, **Esq.,** Chairman, Massachusetts Port Authority Employees Retirement System, will receive the Arthur A. Fletcher Lifetime Achievement Award. The Arthur A. Fletcher Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes a lifetime of achievement promoting and advocating for affirmative action, EEO and diversity.
* **Ms. Ruby Bridges Hall**, Founder, Ruby Bridges Foundation, will be given the Rosa Parks Award. The Rosa Parks Award recognizes an individual who serves as a role model and leader for others through their personal achievements, excellence in a chosen field, a commitment to human, civil rights and social issues and contributions to the betterment of society.
* **Dr. Marie T. Mora**, Professor of Economics, The University of Texas-Pan American, will be the recipient of the Cesar Estrada Chavez Award. The Cesar Estrada Chavez Award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated leadership in support of workers' rights and humanitarian issues.
* **Cox Communications** will receive the Champion of Diversity Award. The Champion of Diversity Award is given to an organization or corporation for outstanding achievements in promoting diversity in the workforce.
* AAAED President Marshall Rose will confer the **President’s Award** on members of the Association who have made outstanding contributions to the Association.

"We are pleased to recognize these distinguished individuals and organizations for their contributions to the cause of access, equity and diversity,” said Dr. Danielle Wood, Awards Committee Chair.  "Great honor is due to these trailblazers who have been outstanding in their fields,” added AAAED President Rose.

The AAAED 41st National Conference and Annual Meeting is open to the press. For more information or to register for the Conference, go to [www.AAAEDconference.org](http://www.aaaaconference.org/).

*Founded in 1974 as the American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA), AAAED is a national not-for-profit association of professionals working in the areas of equal opportunity, compliance and diversity. AAAED has 40 years of leadership in providing professional training to members, enabling them to be more successful and productive in their careers. It also promotes understanding and advocacy of affirmative action and other equal opportunity laws to enhance the tenets of access, inclusion and equality in employment, economic and educational opportunities.*

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[AAAED Conference Website](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001C4QaatDNjWq5dzUrs_Yg_GJwnN8UXAYskLyHTyDiHBBDIVNEWDkmhxTuypaSe43nXiW_Ik4CALb3dJVT6f90iOmVpjUhMkm6g82i4tyPEFm8-dpJJVYMz2rJyk5O4IiQKny1msB5W6jCE0qqBO9BIRC6jRCJefBg9S_YPcMMTvbcmK_JDe0ANMI_n8n1k9cnTfWMflOZqXVE-cgGKd1rdn06X8pmJyuzzfQJSnoy4qTwzFWFpR_I50zSAVYJFgyKcF34sBjLNEXG1agmzy3fQ6_EEpu4Z5F_MSeLmU49wHq08kw0ujWknhMuQlCx4-OC9BfcAeLR4ljh2awCpG6w1K2wBTjTwrMgUmazxomrTZiGipcQ-WjCsz4BGQSBuKUi1c2OL3VLkMY=&c=Dh2aFR5vbCz1v0L6AAHz-QKj959gAU6UiMOisewhyHgANN8Pam6b7Q==&ch=lh8yFKrfHDnHFhPkASCLn5u8C3yHnnR1PSci81M3WisIkQQpitTbnA==)

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